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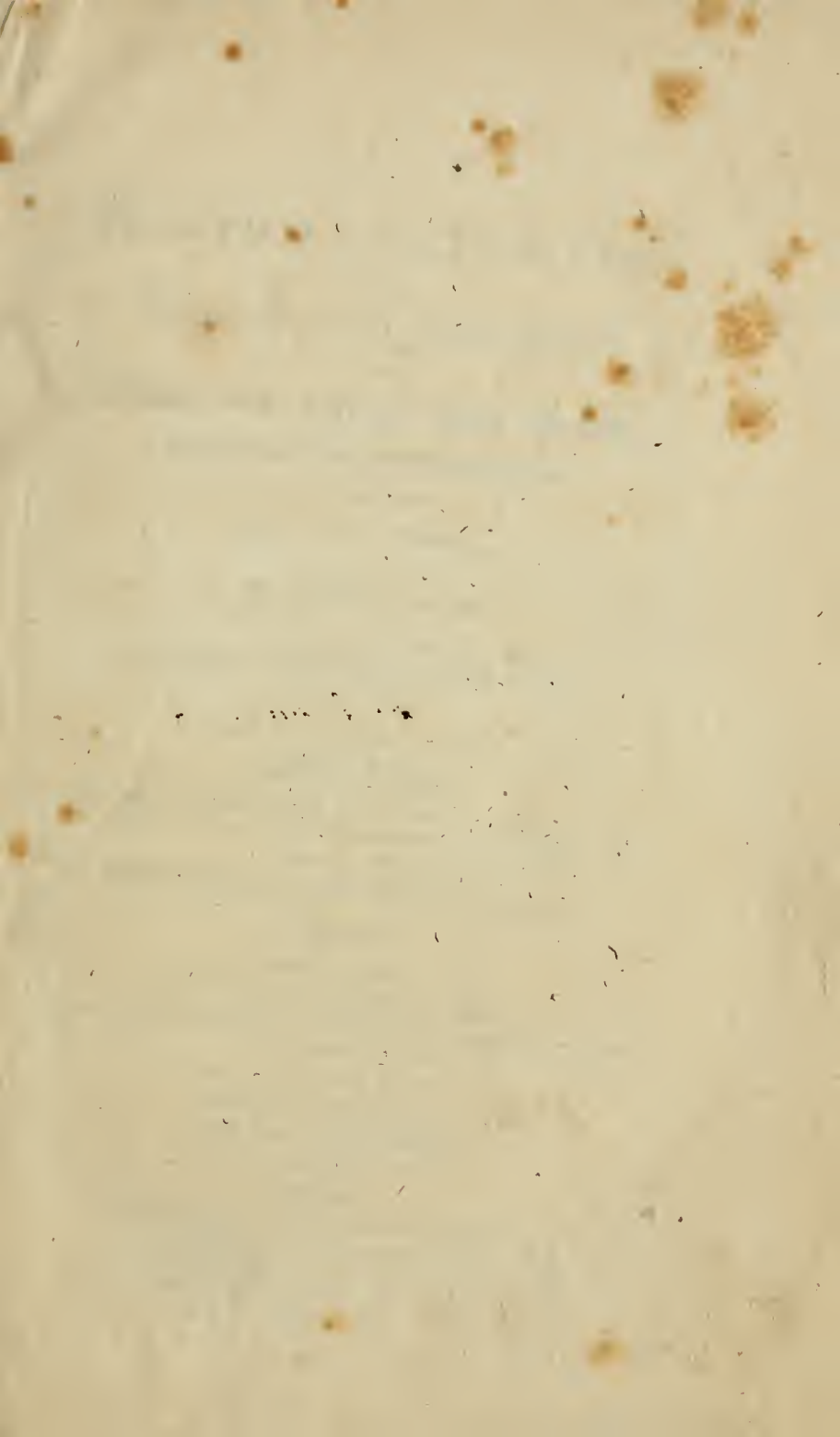
DONATION OF
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Letter.....

No.....

March 15th 1855.

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Norris, Henry Handley,
A practical exposition of
the tendency and





A
PRACTICAL EXPOSITION

OF THE
TENDENCY AND PROCEEDINGS

OF THE
British and Foreign Bible Society,

BEGUN IN A CORRESPONDENCE

BETWEEN THE

REV. H. H. NORRIS,

AND

J. W. FRESHFIELD, ESQ.

RELATIVE TO THE

FORMATION OF AN AUXILIARY BIBLE SOCIETY
AT HACKNEY,

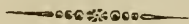
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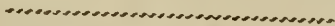
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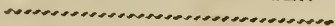
REV. H. H. NORRIS, M.A.

CURATE OF ST JOHN'S CHAPEL, HACKNEY, AND CHAPLAIN TO THE
EARL OF SHAFTESBURY.



SECOND EDITION,

WITH ADDITIONAL NOTES.



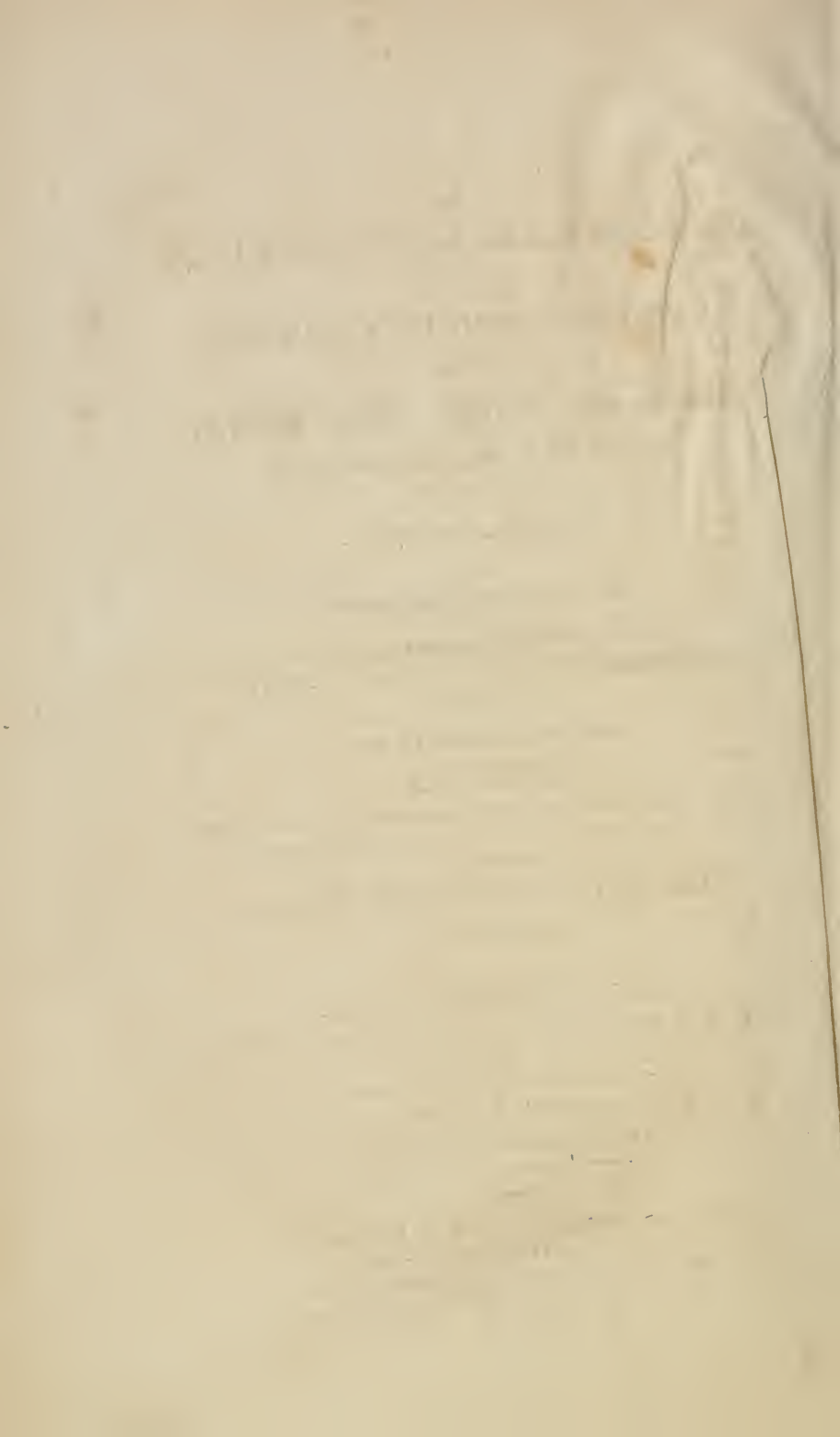
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1814.



"SO vast is the confederacy which this Society combines, and so momentous are its consequences likely to prove, that neither the Philosopher nor the Politician, any more than the Christian or the Philanthropist, can be justified in neglecting to investigate its character, and to consider its probable influence on the condition of human Society."

London Committee's Sketch of B. and F. Bible Society.

"TO exertions promoted by persons of immature age, the British and Foreign Bible Society is indebted for much of its general success, and for some of its most splendid Auxiliary Establishments *."

Mr. Secretary Owen's Letter to the Secretary of the Nassau Hall, Bib. Sec. App. 10th Rep. p. 6.

"IF we have entrenched on piety or plunged into enthusiasm; if we affect too much, or aim at too little; if we sow the seeds of discord, or promote unholy indifference; (these are not imaginary charges) if in these, or in any other respects we are culpable; let us both acknowledge our faults, and avoid repeating them; and if they are essential to our system, let us unanimously say so, and renounce our system for ever."

Mr. Secretary Hughes's Speech, Dec. 22, 1812, at Hackney.

"SOME indulged the expectation of bringing about a union of all religious parties, and a strange union or rather amalgam of the most heterogeneous materials it would be. Should it be attempted, it would probably end in PERSECUTION."

Mr. Secretary Steinkoff's Correspondence with Mr. Secretary Hughes. Appendix to 14th Report of Religious Tract Society, p. 30.

* The classical reader cannot but be struck with the exquisite felicity of this reference of the senior Secretary, in his official communication with the Members of a foreign University, to a celebrated passage in the prince of Latin poets; nor will they less admire the success of his endeavours to preserve, in his free translation, the spirit of the original.

Scandit fatalis machina muros

Feta armis. Pueri circum innuptæque Puellæ

Sacra canunt, funemque manu contingere gaudent.

ÆNEID. Lib. II. Vers. 237.

Leslie, in his Rehearsals, Vol. iv. p. 22, in less harmonious language, has adapted to the circumstances of the times in which he lived, a different scene of the same transaction, which some possibly may not deem too improbable to be subjoined as a sequel to the Secretary's parody in its present application, as exhibiting "the beneficial results" to which he encourages the American students to look forward as the issue of their undertaking.

"Is not this such a clashing of arms as the Trojans heard in the horse the Greeks left them? and might have given them a just suspicion, had not their superstition, and the oratory of Sinon, a spy of the Grecians, benumbed their senses, and made them the instruments of their own destruction."

TO THE
RIGHT REV. FATHER IN GOD,
WILLIAM,
LORD BISHOP ELECT OF LONDON.

MY LORD,

THE loss which the Church in general and this Diocese in particular have sustained by the death of that distinguished Prelate, to whose dignity and labours your Lordship is chosen to succeed, occasions the dedication of the ensuing pages to your Lordship.

Under any other circumstances, than those which characterise the publication, this liberty would not have been taken without your Lord-

ship's permission being first solicited and obtained; but the subject treated of involves in it the discharge of Pastoral obligations, and is therefore tendered officially to your Lordship, as an appeal, from the decision of self-constituted judges, to that legitimate Authority which is at once empowered, and qualified to decide.

The question at issue, my Lord, is whether the engagements entered into by Clergymen at their Ordination are merely words of course, attaching no responsibility to those who make these solemn stipulations; or whether they are to be conscientiously fulfilled in the several particulars specified, whenever occasions arise to which each of them specifically relates.

In this abstracted form the very statement of the question is its solution: and respect for himself would restrain any man from entering into controversy upon it. But, when

reduced to practice, the prejudices and the passions of mankind revolt at its operation, and form so strong a party in the minds of some men as to wrest from their judgment its deliberative and discriminating powers, and to impel them to contend against it with relentless opposition.

In the ensuing Correspondence and Papers, occasioned by proceedings at *Hackney* in prosecution of the design of Incorporating the Parish, one of the largest and most populous in your Lordship's Diocese, in an Auxiliary District of the Bible Society; and of subsequently subdividing it into Bible Associations; your Lordship will find, 'should you honour the ensuing pages with your perusal, the foregoing remark most strikingly exemplified; for you will see the chief patron of that design charging the Parochial Clergy with taking too much upon them, because, being fully persuaded that the direct tendency of that Institution is—to encourage “erroneous and

strange doctrines," which they are pledged to use "all faithful diligence to banish and drive away;" and—to interrupt "quietness, peace, and love amongst Christian people," which they are equally bound "as much as lyeth in them to set forward and maintain," and "especially amongst those committed to their charge," they testified their respect to these solemn obligations, by the most urgent entreaties and the strongest remonstrances they could use, in the outset of the undertaking; and, when these were set at nought, by withstanding the introduction of the evils which they apprehended, and the invasion of their Pastoral office, by all the lawful means in their power.

I am well aware, my Lord, that respecting the tendency of the Bible Society opposite opinions are *still* entertained, even amongst men of distinguished worth and reputation; and I am ready to admit, that it would have been highly arrogant in any one, in the

hitherto divided state of mind in which Churchmen are found upon the subject, to have expected from them, that to such persuasions as those stated above, they should yield a general concession.—But this was not what the Clergy of Hackney solicited. The sum and substance of their solicitation was, that deference might be paid to their conscientious judgment, within those limits, in which they sustained the burthen of subordinate spiritual authority, and had the line of conduct which it was their duty to pursue, marked out to them by the above specified stipulations.

By these stipulations then, my Lord, it is presumed, the question must be decided; and, with respect to the first of them, I am not aware that any one of the panegyrists of the Bible Society has had the hardihood to maintain, that, giving, as it does, the right hand of fellowship to the votaries of “erroneous and strange doctrines,” it

takes that course which is best calculated “to banish and drive them away.” And it is conceived to be of no consequence what other hypothetical advantages these advocates may propound, so long as it is obvious that the giving countenance to it militates against an Ordination vow. That single circumstance, to Clergymen, seeing it in that point of view, must be their ample justification, that in resisting its encroachments upon their Cure, they have not taken too much upon them, but have merely done that which their most solemn engagements had rendered necessary for delivering their own souls.

With respect to the other stipulation alleged as, in the judgment of the Parochial Clergy of Hackney, imposing upon them a conscientious obligation to adopt the course which they did pursue; I am aware, my Lord, of the claims set up in behalf of the Bible Society, that its tendency to promote

“quietness, peace, and love” is one of its most obvious recommendations—and thus, my Lord, is the public judgment of the Church of England cancelled,—one stipulation of its Ordination vow confronted with the other, and the heavy accusation brought against it of imposing upon its Ministers contradictory obligations.

It might be sufficient, for the purposes of this appeal to your Lordship, to alledge that the method prescribed by the Church for the promotion of peace, and bound upon the consciences of her Clergy, is “the banishing strange doctrines away:” not by any violent measures, my Lord, but by those which St. Paul charges the ministry to exercise, by reproof, by rebuke, and by exhortation. But when the integrity of our Holy Mother is impeached, it ill becomes those specially engaged in Her service, to be content with having vindicated themselves, without offering something further in Her vindication. Her appeal, my Lord, is to the testimony of Her

God : and when the boisterous winds of religious contention shall sufficiently subside, that the still small voice of Scripture can be heard, it will be found that submission to the above discipline, now every where spoken against, is the only course to be taken to obtain that rest which we are all gasping after, and to put strife and disquietude away; for as the source of all those distractions which agitate mankind is set forth in that Sacred Volume to be man's hostility against the truth of God, and his "changing that truth into a lie"—so reparation of that great offence—the renunciation of false doctrine of every kind, and the restoration of truth to its primæval purity, and to universal acceptance, are there exhibited as the only terms on which God will reclaim us from the tyranny of our "vile affections," and restore to us "the great blessing of peace."

In the mean time, my Lord, in patience only shall we possess our souls; for in the

following pages, should they find that favourable acceptance at your hands which I most respectfully solicit, your Lordship will discover, that such is the waywardness of the present generation, that whilst the great body of the Clergy, of whose characters in the present instance their accuser must be ignorant, are consigned to obloquy as negligent of the duties of their holy calling *; those under his observation, whom concern for his own character, obliges him specifically to except, are censured as officious †; and that such only as symbolize with himself, in giving countenance to his favourite Society, are the objects of his unqualified admiration ‡. In the present stage of the insidious warfare which is carrying on, your Lordship's Venerable Bench is but covertly assaulted; but in addition to the developments already specified your Lordship will

* See P. 84. Note.

† See 17, 72, 79—82.

‡ See P. 84.

perceive, that to this extent has the alienation of some Churchmen's affections proceeded, that it is deemed completely consistent at once to profess a zealous affection for the Establishment *, and to lay down principles, which, if carried into full effect, would supersede in every Diocese its Episcopal jurisdiction †.

Such are the characteristics of the times, my Lord, in which it has pleased God that our lot should be cast, and that in his Providence your Lordship should be raised to the oversight of this important Diocese : that the aids of his Holy Spirit may be afforded to your Lordship in that measure which your great occasions may require—that your Clergy, “ following with a glad mind and will your Godly admonitions, and submitting themselves to your Godly judgement,” may do every thing that in them lies, to

* See P. 72, 194.

† See P. 42, 31.

to lighten the weight of responsibility, and further your exertions; and that the Divine Blessing may crown them with success, is the earnest prayer of,

MY LORD,

Your Lordship's dutiful Son and Servant,

H. H. NORRIS.

Grove-street, Hackney,
Sept. 131



INTRODUCTION.

IN submitting the following pages to the public the Editor is aware that he is calling their attention to a subject, which has been under discussion, without any respite, for so long a series of years, that a general disinclination prevails to any further enquiry. He has nevertheless felt himself under an imperious obligation to add one to those who have engaged in the thankless, but, he is satisfied, most patriotic and charitable undertaking, of exposing the real tendency of the Bible Society to the world: and he persuades himself, that, should he obtain an hearing from the considerate and unprejudiced part of the community, (to promote whose best interests is his only motive for coming forward,) whatever may be the conviction produced, it will be acknowledged, that his materials are new, and to the purpose, and that his method of handling the question is not pre-occupied; and therefore, that he has not swelled the bulk of

an already voluminous controversy by an unnecessary publication.

The cry, which has been most effectual in drowning the voices of those who have investigated the principles and proceedings of this specious Institution, with the view of exciting, what they deemed, a becoming apprehension of the danger with which it menaces the country, is that “no one argument which can at all be considered as *proof* that it has any of these secret views injurious to the interests of the Established Church,” which are attributed to it, has yet been exhibited—That “the charge hitherto rests upon suspicion and surmise; and that there must be some better and stronger evidence” brought forward, before it can be expected “that an Institution should be condemned, of which excellent and distinguished men have entertained and testified so high an opinion.”

The weight of this objection is much more imposing than substantial; for it demands an evidence which, in the outset of any undertaking, it is not in the nature of things possible to produce: it implies that the connection between moral causes and effects bears no analogy to their connection in nature; and that mankind can draw no sound practical conclusions from past

experience: and it involves this further implication, that all enquiry of a precautionary nature is unavailing; and that every mischievous device must be allowed such progress towards success, that those whom it is circumventing, and, when suffered to have its perfect work, it will ultimately destroy, must first sustain some partial injury from its baneful operation, before any effectual impression can be made upon their minds, that it has any properties belonging to it by which their welfare can be affected.

It is, however, to meet this objection, that the present publication is sent forth. It answers the demand of those who call for DEMONSTRATION; and this is its specific claim to public regard. It is emphatically what its title sets forth—a *practical* exposition of the *tendency* and *proceedings* of the Bible Society. It is an exhibition of its whole plan *systematically* arranged and displayed, not in theory but in *effect*. The “*surmises*” which were deemed too uncandid and improbable to be listened to, are all *verified**; and the *artifices* are exposed, by which “*excellent and distinguished men*” have been lured to give it their support†. The comparative value,

* See p. 72, Note d. 94. Note p. 202—236. 236, to the end.

† P. 88, note n.

moreover, of this *main stay* of the Institution is appreciated *, and its disrespect towards Dignitaries discountenancing its proceedings is pointed out †. From the special relation which it bears to a particular parish, it might be conceived to be a detail rather of a *local* nature, than one of *general* application ; and it is so far true, that a lively interest in the welfare of that parish, to which many powerful ties bind the Editor's affections, first suggested the undertaking ; and much of the exemplification which appears is derived from documents and information which vigilant attention to the proceedings of those, who were resolved, at all adventures, to make *Hackney* an Auxiliary station, put in his possession. But many most important illustrations are extracted from the records of simultaneous movements in other parts of the kingdom : and the parallel passages from scarce remains of Puritanical History, and from the system of the United Irishmen, have a reference to all. Independently however of this, it is to be recollected, that, in all the ramifications of the Bible Society, *one* system prevails ; it being not the least profound article of its policy, that a plan of organization, synoptically exemplified, and most distinctly explained ‡, should be assiduously

* P. 90. note n.

† P. 188. note p.

‡ See a folio sheet, prepared by the Committee in London, entitled, " Regulations respecting Supplies of Bibles and

circulated wherever any opening appears for an attempt at affiliation. Its characteristic principle is that it should be ONE AND INDIVISIBLE. Wherever, therefore, the scene is laid, the drama is the same, as well in its design as in its execution; and though the Editor reports specifically transactions which have taken place at *Hackney*, yet

“ mutato nomine de te,

“ Fabula narratur.”

Hor. Sat. i. 1. 17.

will bring home his narrative to *every* parish throughout the kingdom; which, if already brought within the magic circle of Auxiliary Association, may read in it a transcript of what has been practised upon itself, though very possibly, through inadvertency, without its observation; and, if hitherto undisturbed by the Society's assiduous proselytists, may confidently consider it as a præmonition of what it will experience, should it ever become the subject of their operations.

The Editor, having thus far explained the nature of his design, it only remains that he should put

Testaments to Auxiliary Societies, with *Hints* on the *Constitution* and *Objects* of *Auxiliary and Subordinate Societies*;" with an "Address to Clergymen and Dissenting Ministers" subjoined, inviting them, in the *name* of the General Committee, to encourage their formation "on the *plan* recommended above."

the Reader in possession of the method of its execution.

The Publication commences with a series of *letters* between himself and the gentleman, who, according to his own statement, “ first submitted the measure to his neighbours ;” the correspondence being introduced by a letter from the Editor, addressed to Mr. Freshfield the moment the fact was established that he had this project in view ; and it was written in the hope that it might add something to the weight of the decided expressions of disapprobation which both the Rev. Dr. Gaskin and the Rev. Dr. Watson had signified : and being an additional evidence of the *unanimity* which prevailed amongst the Parochial Clergy of the two Parishes of which his Auxiliary district was to be composed, and of the *strong sensibility* of their feelings upon the subject, might in its associated operation induce him to deem it expedient to abandon his undertaking. This not being the case, the correspondence proceeded till Mr. Freshfield’s third letter convinced the Editor that all further reasoning upon the subject was in vain. No reply, therefore, was returned to it, and this defect is now supplied by copious annotations. The *Appendix* which follows, and which may rather be considered as a *continuation* of the discussion, is much the *most* important part of the work.

It commences with a letter from the Rev. Dr. Watson, conveying to a respectable parishioner his reasons for disapproving of the projected Institution, which, at the joint request of that gentleman, and several of his neighbours, was printed and circulated through the Parish for general information. This is followed by the *unanimous* Resolutions of three successive meetings of Vestry, passed in consequence of the Vicar's letter, and circulated through the Parish: together with another letter from him, occasioned by the vote of thanks expressive of the high sense entertained by the Vestry of the value of his Pastoral exertions.

The preliminary address of the Provisional Committee of the proposed Auxiliary Society follows next; to which a counter address, and a Churchman's reasons for discountenancing the establishment of the institution, (the two replies which it produced) are subjoined. Upon both of these papers Mr. Freshfield published his remarks. These are inserted next in the series with animadversions by the Editor. The three ensuing articles are Socinian pasquinades; prefixed to which will be found some preliminary observations upon the interest taken by Socinians in the Bible Society, interspersed with authentic documents establishing that important fact, and shewing the baneful operation of this alliance upon the Christian Faith.

At the close of these observations, the singular coalition of some Churchmen with Socinians and Papists, in charging Popery upon those of their brethren who have withstood the aggressions of the Bible Society, is touched upon ; and a parallel coalition of the Calvinists and Papists in the reign of James the First is pointed out, and some apposite extracts from the "Gag," which Bishop Montague applied to "the Gagger of Protestants," are produced. The last paper of a controversial nature is an excellent letter from the Vicar of Doncaster to the Editor of the Doncaster Gazette, which was reprinted for the benefit of the Parish of Hackney, and closed the Parochial discussion of the subject.

To these discussions succeed the practical part of the proceedings ; the two next papers being the notice of the Auxiliary Meeting, and a statement of the proceedings of the day, published by authority.

Here the Editor thought that his labours were to terminate. But, no sooner was the Auxiliary Meeting over, and the Parochial collection made, than the gentlemen, who had been active in the execution of that design, commenced ulterior proceedings ; and parcelling out the parish into four subdivisions, they distributed themselves into four new Provisional Committees, and resumed their

functions in that capacity for adjusting all the preliminary arrangements for the incorporation of the *lower orders* in four Bible Associations ; and, after an interval of six months, General Meetings were called in each subordinate district, and these were formally established.

The Editor, therefore, had a further task assigned him to render his practical exposition complete. Accordingly, the account of the Auxiliary Meeting will be found succeeded by a short narrative to connect the two proceedings together, and the whole terminates with the hand-bills, notices, and resolutions, of this perfecting extension of the Auxiliary system, illustrated by the Editor, and commended to the reader's serious and impartial consideration in a concluding address ; in which the pretensions of the Bible Society are briefly investigated, the dangers to be apprehended from it set forth, and that course of proceeding earnestly recommended to the adoption of Churchmen of all descriptions, which in his strong conviction the present emergency requires.

Such is the nature of that publication which the Editor now sends forth into the world. It commenced in a private letter written on the spur of the occasion, and it has gradually increased in bulk till it has swelled to a size, on many accounts,

far beyond his inclination. This, however, has arisen from causes which he could not controul, and it has produced a result which himself only has reason to complain of ; for he does not hesitate to pronounce, that the volume encreases in interest as its pages accumulate, and that the last portion of it is by much the most important ; not from any greater display of talent in himself, but from the materials furnished by others, which at once verify the predictions of those who, at its very outset, pointed out what it would ultimately endeavour to atchieve, and direct the most superficial enquirer into English history where to search for illustrations.

That offence will not be taken at the developement which is made, is a hope which he has not the inexperience to entertain. His object is, *the maintenance of that ascendancy, which the pure and reformed part of Christ's Holy Catholic Church, established in these kingdoms, has so long enjoyed, with that liberal toleration of all who differ from her, which has never been exercised under any other religious domination, and which will immediately cease, should her numerous assailants succeed in their enterprize, and again bring her down to the ground—and this is a service which, however reasonable for a decided Churchman to undertake, he knows cannot be at once efficiently and inoffensively performed.*

The moment *she* fell, at a former period of national frenzy and infatuation, *toleration* fell with her: for the Presbyterians, who first snatched the reins of spiritual power into their hands, esteemed the *rights* of private judgement in Religion, to be *spiritual wickedness*, and did their utmost to abolish the exercise of it *by law*. And when, in the progress of reform, the Independent party gained the mastery over them, though *universal liberty of conscience* was *their* principle, yet tolerating *blasphemies* of every kind—they interdicted *the doctrine and discipline of that Church*, whose *too compliant spirit* had enabled them to acquire the power by which they refused to allow *her* toleration.

The Editor confesses that he does not wish to see the days of the Usurpation return, and that, to prevent their recurrence, is the object of his labours. He would say to every man, in the freest spirit of toleration, “Choose you this day whom *you* will serve;” for *truth*, he is satisfied, is only to be propagated in a *rational* way, and *force* will not work *real* conviction. But while he grants cheerfully this licence to others, he wishes to enjoy the same privilege *himself*, and to be allowed to adopt *the close* as well as the commencement of the Jewish Ruler’s declaration: “As for *me*, and *my house*, we will serve the Lord;” and lest this

should give an offence, which he most *anxiously* disclaims, he begs to qualify it by this proviso, that he arrogates *no* infallibility to *himself*; but he *does* mean to affirm, that the Scriptures promulgate *one* faith to be kept, and *one* mode of worship to be observed, and further to avow his *deliberate* conviction to be, that the Church of England in *both* these respects sets forth the *revealed* way of Salvation.

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At a Meeting of a select Committee of the Society of Bigotry-Arians held the 14th of December, 1812. "A Letter directed to the Chairman and laid before the Committee, was taken into consideration—of which the following is a Copy." (i.e. of the consideration:)

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

Editor states internal testimony of these scurrilous papers being Socinian contributions to the Bible Society—and that from this circumstance alone they derive their importance as proof of the interest which Socinians take in the institution—adduces evidence of their hostility against that Faith which it professes to disseminate—profession of Bible Society exhibited—hostility of Socinians set forth—Improved Version—popular books of devotion unchristianized—Socinian conferences at Hackney; list of subjects for 1812, 13—Mr. Clarke's Socinian papers—evidence summed up and fact of Socinian hostility assumed upon it—Socinian co-operation investigated—proceedings at Hackney—at Newcastle upon Tyne—at Huntingdon—at Ipswich—at Chester and at Uxbridge—account of Mr. Hodgson's publicly renouncing all connection with that Auxiliary Society—and of Mr. Owen's casuistry—policy of Socinians in this double dealing set forth—Mr. Dealtry's protests against this charge upon the Society noticed—his inconsideration

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urishes his countrywomen to beware of it—Provisional Committee deprecate evil passion, and bewail jealousy excited, and employ both soothing and terrifying expostulations to allay it—lament the deplorable lack of Scriptures—Editor enters caveat—proclaim unexampled harmony—Editor pronounces this most outrageous—produces an apposite commentary from Leslie's Rehearsals upon it—advertises to a chef d'œuvre—the late address of the Oxford Auxiliary Society—recommends a passage from the Querela Cantabrigiensis to the associated members of that University—Committee revive the Puritanical war-hoop—Editor draws forth the citation from the long-neglected rubbish of those Reformers—Extracts from Wood's Athenæ—his account of Rev. John Owen, D. D.—denominated the Achitophel of Cromwell—describing his practice of applying prophecy to the work in hand—traits of his character—admonishes advocates of Bible Society of proclaiming the “Lord hath said, when the Lord hath not spoken” 269

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ADVERTISEMENT

TO

SECOND EDITION.



IN consequence of the encreasing demands for the PRACTICAL EXPOSITION, a new Edition is submitted to the public. The Editor would gladly have divested it of its local reference, and have abridged it in many parts which may not be deemed generally interesting ; but to have done this he must have re-cast the whole Volume, and he has not the time at his command for so tedious an undertaking. The Work therefore comes forth in no respect differing from the former Edition, except

that typographical and verbal errors are corrected, and some additional notes and illustrations subjoined, which he thinks will be found to deserve particular attention. He has only to add, that of the mass of evidence which the Volume contains, three items comprise the whole, against the fidelity of which any exception have been taken. The advocates of the Bible Society have publicly attempted to impeach, or rather to soften down by explanation, the statement of the proceedings at Hertford, and Mr. Cunningham and the President of the Clapton Bible Association have privately protested against the expressions imputed to them. These exceptions the Editor has thought it due to the parties concerned to record in their proper places; but he trusts the reader will go along with him in thinking that they give no occasion either to withdraw or to alter the original passages. The exceptions, and the Editor's reply to them, will be found among the additional notes, p. 444, 449, 476.

The Reader is requested to make references
to the additional notes at the following places :—

Page 69, Note b	Page 122, Note c
— 80, — *	— 176, — f
— 88, — n	— 236.
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Page 349, Note h.

Grove-street, Hackney,
Dec. 16, 1814.

By inadvertency in the Editor the following variations exist between his own Copy of his first and second Letter, and that which he sent to Mr. Freshfield. When his third Letter was dispatched, publication was thought a probable result, and the two Copies of that were collated.

- P. 1. l. 12. *dele* "which I am persuaded have escaped your notice."
 p. 3. l. 7. *insert after* "generate, both in principle and in practice,"
 l. 17. *after* "not" *omit* "yet."
 l. 19. *instead of* "to" *lege* "unto"
 l. 28. *dele* "in the kingdom."
 p. 9. l. 3. *instead of* "merits of the question" *lege* "general question"
 l. 6. *after* "doubt" *insert* "that"
 l. 8. *instead of* "with" *lege* "by"
 l. 9. *instead of* "have" *lege* "had"
instead of *stated* "*stated already*" *lege* "*already stated*"
after "*better*" *insert* "*stated*"
 p. 10. l. 27. *after* "*attainable*" *insert* "*in full perfection*"
 p. 11. l. 9. *dele* "it be"
 l. 23. *after* "*communicated*" *insert* "*to us*"
 l. 25. *dele* "that"
 l. 26. *instead of* "*bearing*" *lege* "*which bear*"
 p. 12. l. 5. *after* "*taking*" *insert* "*also*"
 l. 12. *after* "*knowing*" *insert* "*that*"
 l. 13. *dele* "to Scripture"
 l. 16. *instead of* "*this*" *lege* "*the*"
 l. 21. *instead of* "*proceedings*" *lege* "*meeting*"
 l. 22. *after* "*the*" *insert* "*Auxiliary*"
after "*and*" *insert* "*that I*"
 p. 13. l. 5. *instead of* "*of*" *read* "*to*"
 l. 10. *dele* "its members of"
 l. 18. *instead of* "*I trust you will find*" *lege* "*you will find I trust*"
 l. 22. *instead of* "*the*" *lege* "*that*"
 p. 14. l. 6. *after* "*made*" *insert* "*above*"
 l. 13. *instead of* "*in this statement*" *lege* "*upon t^{his} point*"
 l. 18. *after* "*and*" *insert* "*of*"

LETTERS, &c.

LETTER I.

FROM REV. H. H. NORRIS TO
J. W. FRESHFIELD, ESQ.

SIR,

IT has just come to my knowledge that you are engaged in the formation of an Auxiliary Bible Society for a district in which the parish of Hackney is to be included. As a Clergyman of the Church of England, officially connected with this parish, and on many accounts deeply interested in its welfare, I lose not a moment in conjuring you, seriously to re-consider the expediency of this measure, before you finally resolve to carry it into execution; as it involves many considerations not so prominently obvious as to be immediately observed, which, I am persuaded, have escaped your notice.

I beg to assure you, in the first place, that though I have not the honour of a further knowledge of you, than having once (I believe,) dined in your company, yet I am not a stranger to your

high respectability, and have no hesitation in attributing to the most excellent motives the interest which you take in the work, which you have in hand. I beg to assure you also, that I am equally alive with yourself to the importance of the object to be promoted by your projected institution ; that for these last twenty years, nearly half of my life, I have been an active member of a most venerable Society, instituted above a century ago for the express purpose of promoting it ; that, at this moment, the furtherance of the designs of this Society occupies a considerable portion of my time ; and that during the whole period above specified the want of a Bible has never come to my knowledge, which I have not immediately gratuitously supplied. I feel it necessary to state all this to you in the most unqualified manner, that I may preclude the possibility of one moment's misapprehension on your part of the ground, on which I must give my most decided opposition to what you are so zealous to establish, should you not be induced to relinquish your design ; which, for the sake of peace, I hope will be the case.

In the general dissemination of the authorised version of the Scriptures amongst the poor, I go with you heart and hand ; for they contain a cordial for all the hardships of the most destitute condition, and will pacify even those poignant disqui-

etudes, which no other remedy can assuage. And were there no other means of imparting to this valuable class of the community this treasury of consolation, but those devised by the Bible Society, formidable to my apprehension as are the evils, which that Society, from its very constitution, has a direct tendency to generate, I should undergo many conflicts in my mind, before I could resolve to withhold my co-operation; though in affording it, I should incur the risk of becoming a party in the production of such a catastrophe as, I am sure, had you the least forebodings of it, would stagger your present resolution. In such a case, the objections which press upon my mind, and which are all before the public, might possibly be balanced by the acknowledged excellency of the object: but, God be thanked, we are not reduced to this painful and perplexing alternative. There is another door open to us (I speak as to Churchmen) leading directly to the end we aim at. *We* have a Society, by which all the advantages proposed to us by the Bible Society may be secured, without any of the risks above adverted to, which have made so fearful an impression upon the minds of numbers of the most zealously affected Christians in the kingdom, that however excellent be the design of this widely spreading institution, its prominent effect, as every county newspaper in the kingdom will demonstrate, is to unite into one

body every denomination of Dissenters, and to produce strife, animosity, and dismemberment in the Church. I earnestly intreat of you to weigh well these considerations, before you become pledged to prosecute an object which you cannot purchase, but by the sacrifice of peace, and by dis-severing the affections of many, who, now at unity among themselves, are strengthening continually the bonds of Christian fellowship, by the blessed interchange of all the charities of life; and I beg to inforce this intreaty by reminding you, that it comes from a Christian Minister, who is as zealously affected as you can be to the promotion of Christian Knowledge; and I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace; and I pray of Him to give you a right understanding in all things.

I have the honour to be, &c.

Grove Street, Hackney,

Oct. 23d. 1812.

LETTER II.

FROM J. W. FRESHFIELD, ESQ. TO
REV. H. H. NORRIS.

SIR,

I AM favored with your Letter of this date, which has received from me the consideration to which it was justly intitled, as well from the official situation, and respectable character of its author, as the great importance of the subject. Indeed it would have been highly criminal in me, not long since to have considered the matter very fully, in which I have not relied upon any vain conceits of my own, but have earnestly and seriously referred myself to God in prayer, that I might be guided and directed in the affair, according to his holy mind and will.

Having thus endeavored to have my mind rightly informed, I feel warranted in saying, that I am thoroughly convinced, the plan of the British and Foreign Bible Society is right and unobjectionable in principle and practice; and being so convinced, I should feel, that to give less than my utmost assistance to the formation of the intended Auxiliary Society, would subject me to the awful conse-

quence of being ashamed of the name of Christ; and while I should blush for myself, if I could so conduct myself, I should tremble under the consideration, that souls might be passing to eternal perdition, who, with the blessing of God, might be turned from the error of their way, but for a prejudice that paralyzed my exertions.

I am aware you will here refer to your own exertions in the service of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge: I honor you for those exertions, but must appeal to past experience, whether it has called forth, during the century it has been established, any general warm feeling, any zealous, active exertions, on the part of the Members individually. Whether it had even become generally known to exist at the time the British and Foreign Bible Society was established; and whether, on the contrary, even to those who had heard of it, there was not something repulsive in its regulations. For myself, I can state, that though well affected to the Society, and disposed to aid its funds, I was not prepared to subject my principles, unnecessarily, to the judgment of the Committee, and incur the risk of being black-balled by those to whom I was not known, as if I had ambitiously aimed at sharing in the benefit of chartered rights.

But in the present instance, a Society is propo-

sed in which no opportunity occurs of recommending any peculiarity: the pure unmixed Scriptures are to be circulated: no one act can be done by the members of the Society, as connected with the Society, except to distribute copies of the Bible, and whether that be done by Churchmen or Dissenters, the effect must be the same; and as to the intercourse between Churchmen and Dissenters, in connection with this Society, having a dangerous tendency, I should as soon believe it dangerous for Churchmen and Dissenters to trade together, nay, more so, for, in connection with the Society, mutual caution and watchfulness are excited, whilst, in the other instance of intercourse, there is nothing to distinguish the one from the other. But it is said, having a common object, they pursue it, and become familiarly acquainted with each other, and that jealousy, essential to preserve the full difference and distinction, is softened down to indifference, and passes away: that in other words, is saying, that the jealousy proceeds from mutual ignorance, and when we become acquainted with each other, we find it not warranted by actual experience, and the prejudice dies a natural death.

I have to apologize for having taken up so much of your time, and request the favor of you to read, (if you have not already done so) the accompanying

very interesting account of the formation of a Bible Society, for the University of Cambridge, where zeal for the Establishment must be in as full exercise as in any other part of his Majesty's dominions.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient, and very humble Servant,

J. W. FRESHFIELD.

*Stoke Newington Road,
23d. Oct. 1812.*

LETTER III.

FROM REV. H. H. NORRIS TO
J. W. FRESHFIELD, ESQ.

SIR,

IN my former Letter I scrupulously abstained from entering in the least into the merits of the question, upon which I felt it to be my duty to address you; and I did so for this reason, that a complete discussion of it is now before the world, which I had no doubt you had fully considered, and therefore that it would be to no purpose for me to inforce my intreaty with arguments, which have been stated already, (and better than I can state them,) by the Country Clergyman^a, the Dean of Bocking^b, Professor Marsh^c, and Mr. Nolan^d,

^a Address to Lord Teignmouth. Rivingtons. 1805.

Second Letter to Lord Teignmouth. Rivingtons. 1810.

^b Reasons for declining to become a Subscriber to the British and Foreign Bible Society. Rivingtons. 1810.

Letter to Lord Teignmouth. Rivingtons. 1810.

^c Inquiry into the Consequences of neglecting to give the Prayer-Book with the Bible. Rivingtons. 1812.

History of the Translations which have been made of the Scriptures. Rivingtons. 1812.

Letter to Right Hon. N. Vansittart, M. P. Rivingtons. 1812.

^d Objections of a Churchman to uniting with the Bible Society. Rivingtons. 1812.

and yet had failed of carrying any conviction to your mind. Indeed it was beside my purpose, and would have been presumptuous to have entered into the general argument, for upon that I have no right to obtrude my sentiments upon you. It is only when, in the exuberance of your zeal to promote the extension of the Bible Society, you become a volunteer in the work of that ministry in which I hold a subordinate appointment, and take measures to establish in this parish an Auxiliary Institution, that you give me grounds to expostulate with you ; and I beg to press it upon your attention, that it is upon this ground only that I have built my expostulation.

I feel it necessary to do this, because it is evident from your reply, that the full possession, which the merits of the question, generally considered, have taken of your mind, has so absorbed its attention, that the particular considerations, on which I entreated you to deliberate, have wholly escaped your notice. Those considerations limited the question between us to the expediency of establishing in this Parish an Auxiliary Branch of the Bible Society, in opposition to the most conscientious and maturely weighed objections of its Ministers, and at the expence of its peace ; the object being at the same time attainable by the adoption of a course of proceeding, in which they could cordially co-

operate, and in which parochial harmony would be preserved,

Expressly excluding then all reference to the parent Institution, and to those features which mark its character, and, in respect of which, I as heartily deprecate, as you can desire, its success; suffer me to bring the question, thus re-stated, a second time before you, and in order to shake, if it be possible, that full assurance which has betrayed you into the entertainment and promulgation of imaginations, which I cannot but contemplate with dismay, allow me to solicit your attention to the concluding incident in the life of Lord Herbert of Cherbury^a; and to the annals of those fearful times, when domineering fanaticism (professedly for the glory of God) had overturned in this kingdom both the Altar and the Throne. They will suggest to you, I am persuaded, some very seasonable misgivings of your present confidence in the success of your prayers; particularly if you will take it at the same time into your consideration that “God’s holy mind and will” is not now communicated by illapses from heaven, but is to be sought in those Scriptures, in which he has made his final Revelation to man; and that, amongst a great variety of passages bearing immediately upon

^a See Appendix of Documents, No. 1.

the point at issue, St. Paul has declared that every member of the spiritual, as well as of the natural body, has its own office^a; and “that every man “in that calling in which he is called, is therein to “abide with God^b; and withal taking this very material circumstance into the account, that you have not been separated by the Holy Ghost to the very responsible office of overseeing the flock of Christ^c, and of watching for their souls^d, and that there is this very awful warning in the Epistle of St. James, “Brethren, be not many masters, knowing we shall receive the greater condemnation^e.” I confess that I am surprised, that this reference to Scripture escaped you, at the time you were contemplating the instruction of others by the means of this Word of Life; but it only shews how zeal is apt to blind our eyes, when good intentions unwarrantably pursued have hurried it beyond the controlling influence of discretion.

It only remains, that I should thank you for the documents transmitted to me relative to the proceedings of the Bible Society at Cambridge, and should transmit to you an account of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge in return. Your present I have had in my possession long

^a Rom, xii. 4. ^b 1 Cor. vii. 20. ^c Acts xx. 28.

^d Heb. xiii. 17. ^e James iii, 1.

ago, and the importance, which you attach to it, only shews how much the Bible Society owes its reputation to its own false colouring of its proceedings, and to the ignorance of persons at a distance of the real state of things. The truth is, that so far from being established in the University, its attempt to establish itself has in no place been so signally defeated as there; for no sooner did it make known its designs, than the University met as a body, and, by a majority of its Members of ten to one, voted 100l. to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and took no notice of it. The attendance of some of its Members in the Town Hall could not be prevented: but, though all their titles are displayed, I can assure you there is not one of them whose opinions, upon theological points, are held there in much consideration.

So much then for your present; mine, I trust, you will find, (if you choose to scrutinize its correctness,) tells a much truer tale; and the perusal of it, I am persuaded, will render you this essential service, that it will preserve you in future, from the remorse which is so severely felt by every ingenuous mind, when it discovers that it has too precipitately vilified either venerable men or venerable institutions.

I have but one other mistake to rectify, and I

have done. You say, that “no one act can be done by the Members of the Society, as connected with the Society, except to distribute copies of the Bible.” Now what, I will beg to ask of you, is that paper which you did me the favour to inclose, and upon which I have made some observations? What, moreover, are those reams of extracts, recommendations of yourselves, and calumnies upon those Societies and Individuals who will not connect themselves with you, which bear, I am persuaded, no inconsiderable proportion even to the Bibles which you distribute? I beseech you, Sir, use some reserve and qualification in this statement in your future correspondence, and accept of my labours, which, (though ill able, and very much disinclined to divert them from more congenial pursuits,) I have, for the sake of your spiritual welfare, and the public peace, thus largely devoted to you.

I have the honour to be, your’s, &c.

Grove-street,
October 28, 1814.

LETTER IV.

FROM J. W. FRESHFIELD, ESQ. TO
REV. H. H. NORRIS.

SIR,

IT would have given me pleasure had it been in my power to return an earlier answer to your favour of the 28th instant, but it contained matter of so much importance, not merely to the original question, but as it respects Religion generally, that I could not satisfy myself to address you, until I could withdraw as much of my attention from my ordinary pursuits, as was necessary to enable me to write fully upon the subject.

My intention is to leave no part of your Letter unanswered ; but as you consider my former reply did not meet the point upon which you requested me to deliberate, and which you now restate, I shall take that somewhat out of its natural course, and apply to it my first attention.

The question then is, as to “ the expediency of “ establishing in this Parish an Auxiliary Branch of “ the Bible Society.” It no doubt escaped you at the time you wrote, that the Society to be formed is not for the Parish of Hackney alone, but for a District

including that Parish ; and I think it right to notice that circumstance, as it materially weakens the weight of the objection which you press upon me. But to proceed : you have in your first Letter admitted to me all that it could be necessary to prove in favor of the object in view ; which object is, the most extensive distribution of the Scriptures ; and, in order to lay my foundation, I shall here transcribe your own words : “ In the general dissemination of
 “ the authorized Version of the Scriptures amongst
 “ the poor, I go with you heart and hand, for they
 “ contain a cordial for all the hardships of the most
 “ destitute condition, and will pacify even those
 “ poignant disquietudes which no other remedy
 “ can assuage.” You proceed one step further, and admit the end to be so important, that if there were no other means of attaining it, than those devised by the Bible Society, you would undergo many conflicts in your mind before you could resolve to withhold your co-operation.

Thus then we have it established, that the end is right and essential : which naturally brings me to your objections ; and you have limited me to those objections, without reference to what you term the general question. Your first objection is, that the attempt to establish the Society is “ in opposition
 “ to the most conscientious and maturely weighed
 “ objections of its Ministers.”

Here again, for the sake of accuracy, I must remind you, that all the Clergy within the District do not unite in opposing the intended measure; but, on the contrary, some Clergymen (one connected with a neighbouring Parish to your's) are zealously affected to the promotion of this great object: but, for the sake of the argument, let it be taken that the Clergy of the District oppose the plan: with the heads of two of the Parishes within the District, I am well acquainted, and it is impossible to be so without feeling for them the highest esteem and the purest affection; and, though I have not the honor of being personally acquainted with you, yet I know enough of your general character to respect you: to differ therefore with Gentlemen so deserving of esteem, must be, to my mind, a great misfortune: I cannot however think you will consider that the opposition of the Clergy ought to determine the question: these are points upon which every man of independent mind will naturally think for himself, especially when even those who oppose the measure acknowledge the "excellency of the design;" and without meaning it offensively to the Clergy of the District, I may be allowed to remind you, that though the late Diocesan was most strongly attached to the British and Foreign Bible Society, yet the Clergy did not feel that they were bound by his opinion; but, conscientiously differing from him, they did not join in the exertions made

by him in its favor, nor did he consider it an opposition to be complained of; I should hope therefore you will feel that the Inhabitants of this extensive District may, with equal propriety, adopt the sentiments of that venerable Prelate, though, unhappily, you and the other Clergymen do not concur in them.

But what are the objections made by the Clergy? I am not aware of any having been stated, except that the British and Foreign Bible Society "unites
"into one body every denomination of Dissenters,
"and produces strife, animosity, and dismember-
"ment in the Church." Upon the first member of the proposition, I have in my former Letter delivered my sentiments, and have, I trust, shewn that no danger could reasonably be apprehended from the union of all classes of Christians in the furtherance of an object, so simply and unequivocally good, and in which no peculiarity of sentiment, or conflicting interest, could be introduced. The remaining consideration, is the strife and animosity, which you suppose incident to the establishment of such societies. You admit the design to be excellent, very many conscientious Churchmen gladly embrace it, and consider it an additional recommendation in favor of the plan, that it has the effect of bringing into one heart, and one mind, various classes of Christians. Others as conscientiously

object to the plan, and entertain fears of some mischief to be produced by it ; but this does not necessarily create strife or animosity ; neither has any one a right to ascribe a motive to the other, inconsistent with the purest Christianity ; much less is this difference of opinion likely to produce “ dismemberment in the Church.” The Society has no object that can interfere with the doctrine or discipline of any Church ; its members meet only to regulate the general object, the distribution of the Bible. With respect to the religious opinions of each, they cannot come in question ; but each remains attached to his own Church.

Strife, animosity, and dismemberment, can never take place except where the parties engaged in promoting the object, and those who do not concur therein, so far forget themselves and the peaceful character of the Christian Religion, as to ascribe to each other motives which neither entertain ; and I submit to your candour, whether it be a legitimate course, first to oppose a plan, and then urge that very opposition, as an evidence of strife and animosity. I must maintain that such consequences are not the necessary consequences of the measure, and are only incidental, when men forget what they owe to God and to each other ; and I firmly believe, from the respectability of those who have hitherto shewn a disposition to oppose the measure,

that the only circumstance to be regretted will be, that the exertions of the Society will be less vigorous, for want of their co-operation ; but that this transaction will furnish decisive proof, that an Auxiliary Society may be established, without producing any of the evils apprehended.

I cannot conclude the consideration of this objection, without calling to your recollection, how materially the course now taken by some Members of the Establishment differs from that pursued in former times. In the year 1714, Dr. King, then Archbishop of Dublin, wrote against the worship as used by the Dissenters ; but so far from considering it essential to continue the separation between them and the Members of the Establishment by stronger boundaries, he exhorted dissenting Ministers “ to concur with the Clergy, to beat down
“ such vices and immoralities as are confessed, on
“ all hands, to be against their common Christi-
“ anity.” And after enumerating many instances of concurrence to be expected, he added : “ These
“ are but few of those things, that might be in-
“ stanced, in which we may concur in our prac-
“ tice, as well as we do in our opinions ; and if we
“ did, I persuade myself, that though they did not
“ bring us to one religious communion, yet they
“ might much contribute to our living easy with
“ one another ; and take off that uncharitableness

“ which our religious sentiments are apt to cause
 “ amongst us.” And in another part, that good
 Bishop, speaking of the conduct to be expected
 from Christians, in respect of their differences, ex-
 pressed himself thus : “ No man ought to take it
 “ ill that another proposes reason against his opi-
 “ nion ; but to scoff at, or revile any practice or
 “ opinion, that another believes to be founded on
 “ the Word of God, is not only ill manners, but is
 “ of dangerous consequence, being apt to breed
 “ bitterness and animosities between the parties ;
 “ and if it should happen in a case where the prac-
 “ tice and opinion is really warranted by the Word
 “ of God, it would be a blasphemy and impiety ;
 “ and therefore, in all matters of religion, we ought
 “ to avoid this manner of treatment : and whatever
 “ book uses it, we need trouble ourselves no further
 “ with it, for ’tis certainly written only to serve a
 “ party, and not truth.”

I hope I have shewn that the design which you
 admit to be so excellent, may be pursued in the
 way proposed without danger, and, as I apprehend,
 with great advantage ; but you add, as one of the
 grounds upon which the formation of the proposed
 Society is not considered expedient, that “ the ob-
 “ ject is attainable in full perfection by the adop-
 “ tion of a course of proceeding, in which they
 “ (the Ministers of the Parish) could cordially co-

“ operate, and in which parochial harmony would
 “ be preserved.” That course of proceeding is further explained, in a Letter written by the amiable Vicar of Hackney, to a respectable friend of mine, from whom I have also the misfortune to differ ; which Letter has been recently printed and circulated. It is there suggested, that the Dissenters within the Parish should transmit any subscriptions they may choose to make, directly to the parent Institution, and that Members of the Establishment should support the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge.

Very few observations will suffice to shew, that the course suggested would not secure the full and beneficial effect proposed. In the first place it would not possess the advantages belonging to Auxiliary Societies, by which a larger proportion of actual exertion, both personal and pecuniary, is called forth, than could be expected to arise from a less systematic course. The continued interest and exertion in favor of the object would not be effectually kept up, even if the first subscriptions obtained by the plan suggested, should be equal. The object, as it respects the poor of the district, would be entirely waived, and must therefore depend, as at present, upon individual liberality, (in which many disadvantages might be stated) ; and, finally, there can be no reason to suppose this course would tend to

preserve parochial harmony, more than the formation of the proposed Society; because many Members of the Establishment conscientiously approve the plan of the British and Foreign Bible Society, upon the very ground that it is a great and powerful engine, calculated to attain the object more effectually, from the associated strength of all parties being engaged therein, and persons so thinking are not likely to abandon the principle upon which their opinion is formed.

It is not necessary for me to enter into the benefits likely to result from the formation of an Auxiliary Society within the district; that you prohibit me from doing, because that is the general question upon which you waive all argument; I may however be allowed to say, for those who are desirous to establish the proposed Society, that they are not unnecessarily forward in suggesting the measure, inasmuch as the Societies of a similar description, already formed, and others forming, entirely surround the district: and would probably, in a few days, leave it an exception in the midst of an enlightened and respectable neighbourhood.

Upon these grounds, I trust it will appear, that it is expedient to establish within the district, including Hackney, an Auxiliary Bible Society; and I shall not trouble you with further observation or

statement upon that part of your Letter ; but I feel I might be charged with indifference upon matters of great and vital importance, if I did not offer some considerations upon other parts of your Address ; which I shall therefore proceed to notice, in the order in which you have stated them.

I am not insensible to the arguments opposed to the plan and object of the British and Foreign Bible Society, by the authors to whom you refer : for I have indeed read and considered their works ; and yet they have failed to carry any conviction to my mind, upon the propriety or reasonableness of their objections ; and I beg to add one more author, whose work I have read upon the same side of the question : I allude to the Rev. Dr. Maltby : if you will take the trouble to read the latter author, and then compare the objectors with each other, you will find them agree in so few particulars, disagree in so many, and putting their objections upon principles so entirely inconsistent with the admissions you have made, that I should hope they will not appear so important, as you are at present disposed to consider those you have mentioned.

You ascribe to me an “ exuberance of zeal to “ promote the extension of the Bible Society ;” but I pray you, Sir, consider whether it be safe, in the present day, to attack a Member of the Establish-

ment upon this quality, at a time when you, and every conscientious Clergyman, are lamenting the deadness and apathy of Churchmen in general; surely, unless you can add something more to the charge, and shew that it is a zeal not according to knowledge, it may be forgiven me, if I take what you consider a little latitude on that side of the question.

In what respect I have “ become a volunteer in “ that Ministry in which you hold an appointment,” I have yet to learn: if a proposition was made to establish within the same district a Society Auxiliary to that respectable Institution, usually called the Bartlett’s-Buildings Society, I should certainly support it, by my personal recommendation and my purse; and I do not see how, in the one case, or the other, my conduct could fall within your description; but I apprehend it would be consistent with the instructions given by St. Paul to Timothy, to charge those persons under his care, who were able, “ That they do good, that they be rich in good “ works, ready to distribute, willing to communi- “ cate.” 1 Tim. vi. 18.

You have quoted two passages from the 7th and 12th chapters of St. Paul’s first Epistle to the Corinthians, which stand in your Letter as if the Apostle had used them in connection: it will how-

ever be necessary that I should restore them to their actual state, and then I may be allowed to observe upon the first, that the Apostle's reasoning does not appear to answer the purpose for which you use it, so conclusively as you consider ; for he not only ascribes to the meanest member an effective use, but he was evidently referring to the prevailing disposition of the Corinthians, which he had more particularly described in the 3d chapter, according to which it appears, that they were more inclined to call themselves after the names of persons to be exalted as the leaders of parties, than to look to God, who was indeed the Author of the good they received. The other passage you cite from the 7th chapter of the same Epistle, I am sorry to be compelled to say, appears to me not very applicable to your subject. The Apostle supposed persons disposed to abandon their trade or profession, after being called by the grace of God to believe ; which course he thought inconvenient, and provided the profession, trade, or station were an honest employment, it would be better that the individual should continue in it, for the Gospel would teach a man how to behave in any condition, and particularly to bear its inconveniences ; and in this sense you will find the commentators understand the passage. How this can establish your point I do not understand.

A distinct passage is cited by you from the 3d chapter of the Epistle of St. James, and which you consider so important, you are surprized that the reference escaped me, at the time I was contemplating the instruction of others, by means of the Word of Life. I cannot think that this bears more upon your point than the others, upon which I have observed: the primary sense given by commentators to that passage is, that "Teachers ought not to do—
 "mineer and assume authority in the Church." If I had applied this to you, and considered the style of your Letters, as falling within the definition given of the passage, you would consider I treated you disrespectfully; and I should be sorry to do so, but I am sure a perusal of your Letters will satisfy any unprejudiced mind, that in the strained attempt to apply the passages upon which I have observed, and in some other sentences I shall have to notice, no slight excitement of personal feeling has been offered; but I hope the friends of the British and Foreign Bible Society will be found "slow to anger, and of great kindness."

But even giving to the passages the sense you put upon them, they do not apply to me; I have not affected to be a teacher, or to interfere in the work of the Ministry; and if what I have done, or propose to do, can be so considered, then every

person who presents a Bible, or any other book of instruction, to a poor neighbour, is equally reprehensible.

You have solicited my attention to the concluding incident in the Life of Lord Herbert, of Cherbury, and to the annals of those fearful times, when fanaticism produced so much mischief in Church and State ; and you have felt yourself justified in applying, not merely the charge of fanaticism, but of that particular description, upon me : with what propriety you have done so will remain to be seen, when I have considered the ground you have taken. In reference to the miserable individual whose portrait you point to, it is sufficient to state, that I deprecate such conduct as much as you can possibly do ; nor would I be so absurd as either to expect such an answer to prayer, or to act upon such impressions as his imagination presented.

But I come now to the particulars upon which you have relied, for the application of this extraordinary charge. In my former Letter I stated, that upon this important subject I had referred myself to God in prayer, that I might be guided and directed in the affair according to his holy mind and will : this you call “ being betrayed into the entertainment and promulgation of imaginations, you

“ cannot but contemplate with dismay.” You tell me, that the reference you have made to some deplorable effects of fanaticism, “ will suggest some “ very seasonable misgivings of my present confidence in the success of my prayers :” and you desire me particularly to take into my consideration, that “ God’s holy mind and will is to be “ sought for in those Scriptures, in which he has “ made his final revelation to man.” And it is upon my lamentable error, in respect of this important point of doctrine, that I am charged with fanaticism, in the hard words and severe applications I have quoted ; and I owe it, first, to myself to rebut the charge ; and, secondly, to the religious profession we make, that I should examine the matter of your reproof.

You and I both refer to the Scriptures as our warrant and authority ; the one for promoting, the other for opposing, the measure in question : both cannot be right ; one must understand, and the other misunderstand, the meaning of those Scriptures, relating to the point in question : surely then it cannot be considered fanaticism to pray for a right understanding of them, that thereby we may be guided and directed : and until I am better informed, I must believe, that in principle it is no more than praying, that God would control the matter so as to promote his own glory ; and, if I

am wrong, it must be equally wrong to use that part of the Lord's Prayer, in which we implore, "Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth." But without being a fanatic, I may be allowed to proceed one step further, and ask, whether our Saviour did not, in the same instruction in which he taught his Disciples to pray, as an encouragement to prayer, tell them, that their "Heavenly Father" would "give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him:" and I should submit to you we have as much right to take this promise to ourselves, as we have to consider the form of prayer itself as designed for our use. Again, allow me to refer to a passage in St. Matthew, xxi. 22. "And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." And further, in the first Epistle general of John, v. 14, 15. "And this is the confidence we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him." And again, in the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Philippians, iv. 6. "In every thing, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God."

These authorities will, I hope, be sufficient to justify me as a Christian, in the course I have presumed to take, in asking, that if it was the will of

God, the work might succeed; and, if not, I might be enabled to discover my error. But this point, so vital to Religion, must not rest here; let me refer you then to a few selections from the numerous authorities to be found in the offices of our Church, and which, as a Churchman, I regard as highly as you can.—In the Collect for Grace, used in the Morning Service, we are taught to pray to God in these words, “That all our doings may “ be ordered by *thy governance*.”—In the Prayer for all conditions of men, we pray, “O God, the “ Creator and Preserver of all mankind, we humbly beseech Thee for all sorts and conditions of “ men, that Thou wouldest be pleased to make “ *thy ways known unto them*.”—In the Collect for the first Sunday after Epiphany, “Almighty and “ everlasting God, who dost govern all things in “ heaven and earth, mercifully hear the supplications of thy people.”—In the Collect for Easter Day, “We humbly beseech Thee, that as by thy “ special grace *preventing* us, Thou dost put into “ our minds *good desires*; so by thy continual “ help, we may bring the same to good effect.”—In the Collect for the fifth Sunday after Easter, “O Lord, from whom all good things do come; “ grant to us, thy humble servants, that, *by thy “ holy inspiration, we may think those things “ that be good, and, by thy merciful guiding, “ may perform the same*.”—In the Collect for the

ninth Sunday after Trinity, "Grant to us, Lord, " we beseech Thee, the spirit to *think and do always* such things as be rightful; that we, who " cannot do any thing that is good without Thee, " *may, by Thee, be enabled to live according to thy will.*"—And in the Collect for the 19th Sunday after Trinity, "O God, forasmuch as with- " out Thee, we are not able to please Thee; mer- " cifully grant, *that thy Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts.*"

I shall not further multiply passages; but I ask with confidence, whether, after those stated, I am to be branded as an unhappy fanatic, as "enter- " taining imaginations which you cannot but con- " template with dismay:" but I must leave it to you to reconcile your severe imputation, with the obvious meaning of this mass of authority.

The proceedings at Cambridge you treat very lightly, and, as it appears to me, most disrespectfully. And while you consider that I have shown "how zeal is apt to blind our eyes," I must think you are an instance how the judgment of a good man may be perverted by prejudice.

Your present of an Account of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge I have read with much satisfaction; and can assure you I receive

the sincerest pleasure to find that its funds have been so usefully employed. I shall be happy to hear of their exertions being multiplied a thousand fold: I am ready to give them any assistance in my power, and should rejoice to find that they had done so-much, that nothing further remained for the British and Foreign Bible Society to do. These are, and ever since I have heard of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge have been, my sentiments; and therefore I must hope, for the future, you will not charge upon me, that I have vilified either venerable men, or venerable institutions: but even, with the respect I feel for that Institution, I must be allowed to refer you to the Eighth Report of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and then you will decide for yourself, whether it has not effected considerably more in eight years, than the other Society has accomplished in one hundred and fourteen. And further, according to the paper you transmitted me, you will find the two great periods of exertion, which occasioned the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge to diminish its capital, are fixed in 1809 and 1810, after the formation of the British and Foreign Bible Society. I am, however, unwilling to draw any comparison between the two Societies; they are not naturally, and cannot be fairly, in opposition the one to the other; each has great objects to accomplish; there is more than sufficient for both to do; and if Chris-

tians are brought to know their duty correctly, the success of both Societies will be promoted by the same means.

The objects of the British and Foreign Bible Society are too well known to need my restating them: those objects, whether pursued by Churchmen or Dissenters, or a union of both, are consonant with the precepts and principles of Christianity, as set forth in the Articles of the Church of England, and held by the most orthodox of her Clergy; and I repeat, that “no one act can be done by the Members of the Bible Society, as connected with the “Society,” inconsistent with those objects; and I cannot think you are serious in pointing out the publication of the opinions of the late Bishop of London in favor of the Society, to which, I presume, you allude, by the term “Extracts,” or the proceedings of its own meetings, or of the meeting of Auxiliary Societies, as being really inconsistent.

I have now arrived at the end of your Address, in which I find you beseeching me “to use more “reserve and qualification in my future correspondence;” and, with the same entreaty, I shall conclude this long Letter. You are (as your first Letter states) “a Christian Minister, zealously affected to the promotion of Christian knowledge:”

I need not tell you, therefore, that you are to be an ensample to the flock; and I submit to your own decision, whether it be right to speak of the Lord Bishop of Bristol, the Master of a College, Dr. Milner, President of another College, Dr. Davy, also Master of a College, and the Lord Bishop of Llandaff, *Regius Professor of Divinity*, as persons “whose opinions, upon theological points, are not held there (at the University of Cambridge) in much consideration.” They are men whose talents are stamped with the approbation of public authority, and elevated to situations, in which, according to your own argument, erroneous opinions might affect the foundation, upon which the civil and religious constitution materially rest; and it is to their honor, and for the benefit of the Church and State, that they have fully justified the high expectations those best acquainted with them formed of their merits.

In taking leave of you, I beg you to believe, that if I have used language that may appear strong, I have done so with no view to outrage your feelings, or to give you offence; but that I have felt it necessary to speak unequivocally, and therefore to use plain language; and if it should be deemed necessary by you to devote more of your valuable time to me, I hope, for the sake of the Religion we profess, you will be able to do it with more

moderation than you have used in the Address, to which I have now concluded my reply.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

J. W. FRESHFIELD.

Stoke Newington Road,

Oct. 31, 1812.

LETTER V.

FROM REV. H. H. NORRIS TO
J. W. FRESHFIELD, ESQ.

SIR,

I AM not aware that in my last communication I trespassed beyond the "original question," in one single particular, farther than you yourself had carried me, by the introduction of extraneous circumstances into your Letter, to which I felt it to be my duty to reply. It is my present purpose to lay myself under the same restrictions, and therefore you are troubled with this Letter, merely to correct the many erroneous conclusions, and misapprehensions, which your favour of the 31st of October, now before me, contains.

You begin, by apprizing me of a circumstance, which you apprehend had "escaped" my notice, but which you will find expressly stated by myself, in the introductory sentence of my first Letter to you. The circumstance, I assure you, has never been lost sight of, and since I have been apprized of the importance which you attach to it, I have more deliberately considered it; but neither then

did I see how it affected in the least the weight of my objection, nor to this moment have I made the discovery.

Pursuing your own arrangement of the points under discussion, I come immediately to an erroneous conclusion which I cannot suffer to remain uncorrected. This erroneous conclusion is, that I "admit" all that it would be necessary for you to prove, with reference to the *object* of the Bible Society, in order to establish its unqualified excellence, and "essential" importance. Against this conclusion I protest, as not fairly deducible from my words. By "the general distribution of the authorized version of the Scriptures amongst the poor," I meant only to profess my cordial adherence to that principle of the Reformation, which guarantees to every Christian indiscriminately free access to the Word of Life; and my readiness to co-operate, heart and hand, in the giving to that principle full effect. But I never meant to express my concurrence in the outrage upon that principle, with which the Bible Society appears to me too justly chargeable, and of which our Saviour has most impressively warned his Disciples to beware^a; and when I held up the practice of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, as ~~that~~ course of proceeding, by

^a Matt. vii. 6.

which all the good professedly intended by the Bible Society could be attained, and moreover stated how I had myself pursued the object of this new Institution, I thought I had sufficiently guarded my expressions, to secure them from being construed into an approval of a distribution of the Scriptures characterized by nothing but its extent. It had indeed occurred to me to specify those provisos, which it is very necessary to make, before the demands of the Bible Society, in behalf of the excellence of their object, are acceded to ; for in the prosecution of any object, in proportion to its excellence ought to be the measure of our circumspection ; but I avoided the statement, because it belonged to the general argument which I determined to avoid, because it would have carried me to greater length than I wished to extend my observations, and because, as I have already stated, I thought what I had said sufficiently qualified to prevent any misconception. I shall still persevere in my resolution not to enter upon this argument, but I beg most explicitly to declare, that, approving heartily of the general distribution of the Scriptures amongst *both rich and poor*, I still think that the manner, in which they are distributed by the Bible Society, is far from being calculated to promote the proper end of their distribution, the dissemination of Christian Knowledge ; inasmuch as it has a direct tendency to degrade the Sacred Volume in the eyes of the

people, and so to lessen its practical influence upon their minds.

You next except against the accuracy of my statement, that all the Ministers of this Parish are adverse to your plan; and, in proof of this exception you alledge, that “a Clergyman connected with a neighbouring Parish,” is zealously affected towards it. This requires no answer; and had I extended my statement to the proposed district, the answer would have been easy; for the Ministers of a Parish are those who have cure of souls within it, and the whole of those, both at Newington and here, deprecate your proceeding.

But you waive this objection, that you may meet mine in its full force; and, by concluding that *I* shall not consider “the most conscientious and maturely weighed objections of the Ministers of the Parish, a sufficient ground for abandoning your design,” you intimate that this is *your* persuasion, and could I for one moment suppose, that you had unhappily contracted that most uncharitable, but most assiduously propagated opinion, that the National Clergy are, indiscriminately, ignorant and disqualified for the management of the weighty concerns of their profession, I should be able to assign to myself some reason for this persuasion having taken such firm possession of your

mind, that you consider it a thing of course that I shall concede it; and therefore should not, in the first instance, be surprised that, on a subject so calculated to excite the sensibilities of the pious Christian, you should give bold way “to your independent mind,” and should think it “natural” to decide for yourself, against them, on the best means of promoting the spiritual edification of their flock: but this solution of the difficulty would afford me only a momentary satisfaction; for you have done those, against whom you oppose yourself on the present occasion, the justice to deliver a decided opinion in their favour; you have admitted that they do display a becoming zeal in discharging the duties of their Holy Calling; and therefore your assumption is that the opinion of Divines of acknowledged ability and worth upon a question of Theology, (for such I must always consider the best means of promoting edification to be,) is not entitled to the same consideration that you would claim to your opinion upon a question of Law. I beseech you, Sir, ponder in your heart awhile this apparently parallel case; and do point out to me, what it is that creates this very essential difference between our respective professions, that it should be deemed perfectly monstrous, in the one case, in any one, how great soever his “independency of mind” to pursue a line of conduct, in matters subject to its cognizance, opposite to the opinion of its accredited practitioners, and yet

in the other it should be deemed "natural" for him, under similar circumstances "to think for himself?" But I refer you, Sir, to the Scriptures, the *Letter* of which you are under such an impulse to disperse: in them the point is most unequivocally decided; and if you search them diligently, having first prayed heartily to their Divine Author to remove the bias of prejudice from your mind, you cannot fail, even without the aid of either "*note or comment*," to come to the knowledge of the truth.

From assuming that the remonstrances of the Ministers of a Parish are not entitled to that degree of respect, that they should induce you to abandon the measure in question, you proceed to adduce a precedent to support your assumption. And the freedom, to differ with the late venerable Bishop of London upon the propriety of joining the Bible Society, taken by the Clergy, and approved by his Lordship, is produced as affording you in the present instance ample justification. But neither are the cases parallel, nor is your inference drawn from the premises legitimate. I will draw out your argument in form, and you will at once perceive that the mere statement of it is its refutation. The Clergy withheld their concurrence from a Religious Society which their Bishop honoured indeed by his support, but never thought proper authoritatively to recommend; therefore the Inhabitants of two contiguous

Parishes may combine to establish within them a Religious Society in opposition not merely to the opinions, but to the solemn remonstrances of their respective Ministers, sanctioned by the opinion of their Diocesan : in the one case there is no infringement upon Ecclesiastical Authority, in the other you will see, that all its limitations are obliterated ; and that there is an actual rising of those who are to learn religion, against those appointed to teach it ; of those who have devoted their talents to other professions, against those who have been trained up in the Schools of the Prophets, and according to the ordinary course of God's dealing with the sons of men, waiving the consideration of their divine commission, have equal right with the Physician and the Lawyer to seat themselves in their own chair, and to claim respect to what they say.

But the inapplicableness of Bishop Porteus's example, I think, does not end here : he approved of the original institution of the Bible Society ; but does it therefore follow, that he would approve of its present proceedings ? that he would approve of its parcelling out the country into new departments, and erecting a lay-eldership in each, to supersede the ministrations of the regular Clergy ? Do not, Sir, whilst you reverence that departed Saint, impute to him such inconsistency as this : for does not

the imputation imply, that his personal and official conduct were in contradiction to each other, and that, in the former capacity he sanctioned measures, directly levelled at the validity of that commission which in the latter he conferred?

But in this short passage, you have so accumulated mis-statements, that I have yet another to correct: for you speak of the Inhabitants of this extensive district, without any limitation, as opposed to its Clergy in the present question. Allow me, Sir, to ask you, is this a fair representation? Do the unknown individuals, whose proceedings are conducted with such privacy (that, with a few exceptions, even who they are I have not been able, by the most diligent investigation to discover,) constitute all the Inhabitants of the two Parishes to be amalgamated into this Bible Society district? They do not constitute, you know, a thousandth part of them. But the question, in which the Clergy of the Church of England are specially interested, is, Do they constitute, or in any degree represent, that portion of the said Inhabitants who wait upon their Ministry? Our paramount concern, Sir, is for our own flock; if those, who conscientiously renounce our communion, feel it to be a duty to associate for the purpose of giving furtherance to the designs of the Bible Society, they neither ought, nor will they experience any opposition from us;

but we may be permitted, I trust, without offence, to feel a godly jealousy for those committed to our care, and accepting of our labours; and we may protest against their being confounded in the undistinguishing denomination of the Inhabitants of the district, when we know from personal enquiry, (as far as we have been able to make it,) that the whole of them protest also themselves against the proceeding.

Having shewn, as you conceive, the unreasonableness of the opposition of the Clergy to the proposed formation of an Auxiliary Bible Society; you proceed to consider the objections alledged as the grounds of it; and you enter into a discussion of my chief objection, which I will extract a little more at large than you have re-stated it, that “how-
 “ ever excellent be the *design* of this widely spread-
 “ ing Institution, its *prominent effects* (as every
 “ County Newspaper will demonstrate,) are to unite
 “ into one body, every denomination of Dissenters,
 “ and to produce strife, animosity, and dismem-
 “ berment in the Church.” Now if you will consider my objection in this its more perfect form, you will, at once, perceive that all your reasoning upon it is perfectly irrelevant; for I appealed not to reasoning, but to matter of fact; and I told you that I purposely avoided arguing upon it, because the argument had been already exhausted in publi-

cations which are before the world; and from which, I am satisfied that, there are few unprejudiced readers but will be so established in the validity of the objection, in both its parts, that no sophistry will shake their conviction.

I pass over therefore three pages of observations, and I come to your reasons for rejecting the alternative suggested, for the preservation of peace, by him, whose Ministry among us has been one continued exertion to prevent the bonds of it from being broken, and who, if he succeeds not here, will, I believe, have to regret this as the first occasion on which he has failed to sooth others into a congenial spirit with his own.

The "fulness of the effect," I admit, will be more completely accomplished by the projected Auxiliary Society than if the present method be suffered, without a rival, to continue its unobtrusive operation: but that the effect will be beneficial, in proportion as it is full, is a position which I confidently deny. On the contrary, I have affirmed, and Mr. Nolan has incontrovertibly proved it, that the fulness of this effect is its most baneful property; for the consequence of it already produced is, that Bibles are prophaned to the basest purposes, being hawked about by Jew Boys amongst their contemptible merchandize, being

in use at Cheesemongers to wrap up their articles of traffic, and being bartered at the Gin Shop for the means of intoxication.

Your other reasons for rejecting the proposed peaceful alternative are all dependent upon this; and therefore I may waive their consideration; but I must not omit to express to you the obligations of myself and my Clerical Brethren, for your very complimentary representation of the state of our respective Parishes,—that but for the Apostolical interposition of this Auxiliary Society “they would “probably in a few days become an exception to “surrounding light and respectability.” If upon this subject my mind were susceptible of any but serious sensations, I should smile at this undisguised appreciation of our labours, which stamps a countless value upon your expressions of respect, and is an excellent gloss upon those commendatory passages, to guide us, who from habit are plain dealing men and literal interpreters, to their more recondite interpretation.

But here is exhibited another of the many deplorable breaches on social happiness which the Bible Society has occasioned, especially since affiliation has been the order of the day. It so completely entrances the understanding, that a person in himself kindly-affectioned, doing justice, loving mercy, and

walking humbly with his God, once fascinated to drink of its incantations, from that time forth becomes blind to all religious excellence, and to every commendable quality belonging to those who resist the importunity used to bring them within the magic circle of the fraternity, and can so far forget himself, as to hold up a neighbourhood to contempt as "an exception to surrounding light" and respectability." I am sure, Sir, that your religious principles will revolt at this, and I am not without hope, that it will prove such a stimulus to the acknowledged liberality of your mind, as to excite you, by a noble effort, to extricate yourself from the delusion.

I have now followed you through your animadversions on the main argument; and I come to those points not necessarily connected with it, which you introduced into the discussion, and therefore made it necessary for me to reply to. Dr. Maltby's work I have never read; and as those four authors, to whom I referred you, have, in my judgment, completely exhausted the subject, and developed all the depths of the design, I must beg to be excused the perusal to which you invite me.

I pass over all your animadversions upon the passages, which I produced from Scripture to prove to you that your "zeal was not according to know-

“ledge;” and therefore, that species of “exuberance,” which, from its widely spreading effects, is an hundredfold more injurious to religion and to society than the apathy which you complain of: and I pass them over, because I think that, notwithstanding all you have alledged to demonstrate their misapplication, they still remain uninvalidated; and are profitable for your “instruction in “righteousness.”

I now come to some misapprehensions of my meaning, which, both for your sake and my own, I am most anxious to rectify; because, as you have interpreted it, it involves accusations which it was the farthest from my intention to lay to your charge. I advert to your misconstruing my reference to Lord Herbert, and to the regicides, into an identification of yourself with them in the crimes of which they were guilty. You had stated to me, that by “earnestly and seriously referring yourself to God “in prayer,” to be “guided and directed in the “affair, which you had in hand, according to his “holy mind and will,” you had confirmed yourself in a conviction, “that should you give less than “your utmost assistance to the formation of the “intended Auxiliary Society, you would become “subjected to the awful consequences of being “ashamed of the name of Christ, and of suffering “souls to pass to eternal perdition, who, with the

“ blessing of God, might have been turned from
 “ the error of their ways, but for a prejudice which
 “ paralyzed your exertions.” Now it will immediately strike you, that your convictions, and those of the zealous and learned Divines appointed to preside over the religious concerns of the two parishes, to be included in the proposed district, are upon this point in direct opposition to each other ; and that therefore, if your prayers have really received that answer from Heaven which is so firmly impressed upon your mind, they are involved in those fearful consequences, which an abandonment of your project would have entailed upon you : for they do not merely withhold their concurrence from the measure, but they discountenance it. As one of those Divines, whose conscience bears him witness, that, with all the fervency he can awaken, he applies continually to all the appointed means of procuring divine illumination, and thus attaining to the knowledge of the truth, can you expect, that I should admit that your prayer had been heard, and that mine, and those of my brethren had been rejected? This you will scarcely have the inconsideration to exact from me. And, conceding this point, you must of necessity concede the alternative to this, that in our judgment you were under delusion. What then was the course which, under such circumstances, duty pointed out? Obviously that which I pursued : to endea-

your, by the allegation of instances of persons whom you yourself would admit to have been under strong delusion as to the success of their prayers, to shake, if it were possible, your confidence in the issue of your's. This, Sir, was my whole purpose in referring to those very monitory passages of our annals, to which I called your attention; and it is a purpose which, thus explained, I am persuaded you will now view in a more favourable light, and consider not as an offence unto you, but, being an eminent act of Christian benevolence, as laying you under considerable obligation.

But my persuasion of your having been betrayed in this momentous concern into so fatal a mistake was not founded simply upon the opposite results of our respective applications to the Throne of Grace; it received very considerable confirmation from the specific result of your's as you have stated it, in terms, which I felt it my duty to tell you, "I could not but contemplate with dismay;" for it was this part of your Letter, and not, as you misconceive, your statement that "you had referred yourself to God in prayer," which constrained me to make that observation; and I cannot now read the passage without being similarly affected. For what is it that you have promulgated as an impression wrought from Heaven upon your mind? In the first place, "that, should you give less than

“ your utmost assistance to the formation of the
 “ intended Auxiliary Society, you would become
 “ subjected to the awful consequences of being
 “ ashamed of the name of Christ:” that is, that
 you should incur this fearful responsibility, unless
 you set at nought the unanimous remonstrances of
 those, who, within the two parishes which are to
 compose the intended district, are authoritatively
 appointed, and have pledged themselves by the
 most solemn vows, to make that holy Name their
 boast, and to excite the people committed to their
 care to glory in it also; of whom, moreover, you
 are constrained to bear this testimony, that they
 are eminently zealous for the honour of their Lord
 and Master: and who remonstrated against your
 proceedings for these reasons, amongst others, that
 they are full of apprehension lest those proceed-
 ings, so far from contributing to magnify the name
 of Christ, should in their consequences, expose it
 to the very indignity, from the guilt of offering
 which you are so anxious to exonerate yourself,
 —should put it to an open shame.

Surely upon consideration, Sir, the very resist-
 ance, which this project has experienced, will afford
 you convincing proof that your’s must be a vain
 imagination; for can it bear a question, whether a
 crime of so deep a die as the being “ ashamed of
 “ the name of Christ,” is so ambiguously defined in

Scripture, that a large body of conscientious Clergy men, devoted to their profession, should inadvertently implicate themselves, and labour to involve others in the guilt of it? And yet it is evident that they are guilty, and are labouring to make others guilty also, if you are under no delusion as to the line of conduct which you conceive to be imposed upon yourself, as necessary to the preservation of innocence. This representation, I trust, will thus far undeceive you.

But there is this further persuasion wrought upon your mind, and as confidently avowed as the foregoing, that should you give less than your utmost assistance to the formation of the intended Auxiliary Society, "souls might be passing to eternal perdition, who, with the blessing of God, might be turned from the error of their ways, but for a prejudice which paralyzed your exertions." Here again, Sir, had it occurred to you who those are, to whom you have opposed yourself, conscientious indefatigable Clergymen, you would have thought it possible that their judgment, upon the efficacy of any measure "to save souls from perdition," was preferable to your's; and doing them the justice to believe, that they resisted the establishment of the projected Institution, not merely because they were satisfied of its neutrality in this respect, but that in this very respect it was baneful in its operation;

you would have suspected the correctness of your own persuasions, rather than have confidently promulgated that, which, by necessary implication, traduces them as either criminally ignorant, or most traitorously unfaithful. But in the censure which this latter imagination conveys, the Master of the house is included with his household; for the formation of Auxiliary Bible Societies is a very recent invention; and therefore if, in themselves, they indeed possess that powerfully reclaiming influence, that they will “save the souls of many,” who, but for their instrumentality, “would pass to eternal perdition;” the method of salvation has been hitherto essentially incomplete; Christ, though the Author, could hardly, in every sense, be called the Finisher of our faith; and the means of turning sinners from the errors of their ways, which his Divine Wisdom would thus seem to have but imperfectly provided, would be now improved upon by man’s device, and human ingenuity would arrogate to itself the praise of carrying it on to perfection.

It was with reference to this intended dedication of yourself to aid the labours of those authoritatively commissioned to “save from perdition the “souls” of the inhabitants of this parish, that I spoke of you as becoming “a volunteer in that Ministry, in which I hold a subordinate appointment;” and as I specifically reminded you, that

you had not been “ taken from amongst men to “ minister for them in things pertaining unto God,” I am surprized that you should not perceive the propriety of the denomination. I know indeed, that it is one of the maxims of the children of “ the “ *new æra of light*,” that “ the Bible is now to do “ its own work,” and to supersede *our* antiquated Institution : and upon this principle I could at once account for my phraseology requiring explanation ; but you would have great reason to complain of me, had I, even by implication, imputed to you this conceit, till I had learnt from your own words, that you had been beguiled into it ; and yet, upon this principle alone, could any other form of expression accurately describe your invasion of our particular province, contrary to our most earnest solicitation.

I am very anxious here to guard against a misconception of my meaning, which might lead you to suppose, that I am jealous of the co-operation of the Laity with us in our spiritual labours, and that I count their interference in it an intrusion : and this anxiety is awakened by your representing “ the presentation of a Bible, or any other book of “ instruction, to a poor neighbour,” as a parallel to that proceeding of your’s which I have felt it to be my duty to reprehend ; and by your citation of 1 Tim. vi. 18, where the genuine exercise of Chris-

tian benevolence is so explicitly and comprehensively commanded, as your full justification. Now, so far from discouraging this valuable co-operation, I beg to assure you that I am most tenderly alive to its incalculable importance; and my friends amongst the Laity will, I am sure, bear me witness, that I am not deficient in my importunity with them to provoke them to yield it to me on all occasions. But it is one thing to aid our labours, and another to supersede their operation. It is one thing to act, in due Christian subordination, in giving effect to our ministry; and another, by the substitution of your own services to the disparagement of our's, to make it appear useless, nay obstructive to the propagation of the Gospel. The former of these methods of dealing with us we solicit with all the ardency of desire: the latter we are bound to discountenance, or we shall betray our Master's cause, and incur his heaviest indignation. For "the dispensation of the Gospel is committed to us^a;" and our Divine Master's engagement to us is, "Lo! I am with you always, even to the end of the world^b:" his charge, "Occupy till I come^c:" I appoint you my "Ambassadors^d;" I appoint you the "stewards of my household^e," "the overseers of my flock^f; I place you as

^a 1 Cor. ix. 17.

^b Matt. xxviii. 20.

^c Luke xix. 13.

^d 2 Cor. v. 20.

^e Luke xii. 42.

^f Acts xx. 28.

“ watchmen ^a ” over my people, and you are “ to give account to me ” of all the souls thus committed to your care. We cannot therefore, however powerfully moved to it by the love of peace, and by those importunate cravings of human infirmity to be disentangled from anxiety—we cannot make any compromise, which shall even imply an acquiescence in the devolving upon unconsecrated persons its fearful responsibility, however inconsiderately precipitate they may be to take it upon themselves : for woe will it be to us if we do not raise our warning voice against all invasion of our sacred charge ; if we do not deliver, and continue steadfast in delivering, without mutilation, this Apostolical summary of our Divine Master’s message to the world ; this compendium of the doctrine and discipline of Christianity, “ that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.” (2 Cor. v. 19.)

It is not hence to be inferred, that you, Sir, are excluded—I should rather say exonerated, from giving furtherance in your own order to the great work of redemption : we are all one another’s keepers : we are all bound to “ exhort one another

^a Ezek. xxxiii. 7. Heb. xiii. 17.

“ daily, whilst it is called to-day ;” and to “ provoke each other to love and to good works ;” but still we are to recollect that there are those specially appointed “ to watch for souls ;” those significantly distinguished as men that must give account, and “ at whose hands souls will be required :” and not having been separated to this holy fellowship, we are so to regulate this most acceptable exercise of Christian benevolence, as those who are serving God in this respect in a subordinate capacity. We are to confine it chiefly to private admonition, in our families, and in the circle of our acquaintance ; but whatever is of *common interest*, or has been provided for by a *competent authority*, that, for the preservation of “ decency and order” we are to leave to those whom it specifically concerns.

In association with the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, you would not be betrayed into these encroachments, the precise nature of which I have at so much length endeavoured to define : for her regulations are all formed in subserviency to that Ecclesiastical Discipline which, (with the exception of that short interval when fanatical extravagance was permitted, in judgment, to have its perfect work) it has been our eminent happiness to enjoy, from the first establishment of Christianity in our land. She receives into her bosom, Sir, no self-constituted authorities ; the Bi-

shops in their Dioceses, the Deans and Chapters in Cathedral Cities, and the Parochial Clergy in their respective Parishes, originate every measure by which she promotes her designs. The cases, therefore, of the two Societies are not so analogous to each other as you misconceive them to be; for the associates of the one are *as regularly enlisted soldiers* in the service of God, but those of the other as *undisciplined and unruly volunteers*.

As you have made it necessary for me to re-examine these two irresistible impulses, which you state as at this time predominating in your mind, and alledge as the justification of your present proceedings; I have bestowed upon them the more thought and consideration, because they appear to me to be the only ones which could have impelled a Gentleman seriously religious, as I believe you to be, into what I cannot but consider as a most plainly prohibited, and, in its effects, a formidable violation of Christian duty: and that they are the only ones, this notable fact affords me ample satisfaction, that they are those exclusively resorted to, on all occasions, when the zeal of well-affected, but inconsiderate Members of our Church is to be put in violent agitation, that they may be hurried by its excitements beyond the bounds of religious sobriety, in prosecution of the specious good provided for their fascination; and are also the regularly re-

capitulated allegations of defence, whenever that line of conduct is to be vindicated, which those impulses were originally urged to produce. But surely, Sir, you have not considered to what lengths they will carry you, when once suffered to break those bounds which are their divinely prescribed limitations. Humanly speaking, they are irresistible, as I have above described them. God's authority indeed can awe them into subjection, whilst his "still small voice is heard;" but they set at defiance every earthly restraint, and, acquiring impetuosity from indulgence, they come at length, as the instructive page of History will admonish you, to consecrate violences, which you now shudder at, to be acceptable acts of devotion.

I pass over your citations from Scripture, and from our Liturgy, produced in reply to what you misconceived to be the drift of my animadversions on the success attributed by you to your prayers; because I am persuaded you will now consider any observations upon them an unnecessary trespass upon your time. And in reply to your charge against me of disrespect towards those concerned in the Cambridge proceedings I have only to observe, that I delivered no opinion, but merely stated a fact; a fact moreover which I confirmed by the most irrefragable testimony: but why you

should bring the Bishop of Llandaff from Westmoreland, and the Bishop of Bristol from his Lodge in Trinity College, to partake in what appears to you so distasteful, I must refer it back again to you to explain.

I read with pleasure the moderated reprehensions which the account I transmitted to you of our Venerable Society has produced. Had the remarks upon it in your last Letter been as cautiously expressed, I should have been spared a duty equally unwelcome to us both. Still, however, the Bible Society is brought forward as its rival, and eclipses in your eyes all its exertions ; for you claim with confidence this concession from me, “ that it has effected more in “ eight years than the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge in an hundred and fourteen.” I feel so little interest in this question, that I will not detain you to discuss it ; for let me remind you, that you have limited your claim to *quantity* of work, (of which notwithstanding, Dr. Marsh has shewn that your advocates publish most exaggerated statements) ; the *quality*, however, either by a judicious choice, or a happy coincidence of terms, is left out of the account ; and thus I am spared the necessity of altercation.

I wish you had persevered in this reserve, for you next bring a *sore subject* before us. Had you

been aware, that by adverting to our reduction of capital you would have revived *the Welsh Bible concern*; tenderness for your Society, I trust, would have induced you to suppress all reference to a circumstance, which makes it necessary for me to recall to light that *awkward transaction*. For near a century the Bibles and Prayer-books in use in the Principality of Wales had been supplied through our Society. The Institution which you patronize then reared its head, and its first act was to invade this department of our charitable designs, and to endeavour, by an insidious haste, to anticipate the provision which we were then preparing for that people, as a supply for their spiritual wants; that so you might supplant the interest which, by our instrumentality, the Church of England had acquired among them, and might turn it into a sectarian channel. But the Bishop of London and Dr. Wordsworth have sufficiently exposed this proceeding. You made it necessary for me to enter thus far into it, as preliminary to the explanation how it came to pass that, in the years which you specify, our expenditure so much exceeded our supplies. Our Society felt a becoming jealousy over those who had been so long the objects of its care, and attent only to the pushing forward the delivery of 20,000 Bibles, to which it had been voted the edition should extend, it neglected to make that appeal to publick liberality for contributing towards

the expences of the work, which it had been accustomed uniformly to do on every former occasion. Hence it was, that that unusual draft upon it occurred, which you misinterpret as an evidence of its *suddenly* increased activity. The truth is, Sir, that it has pursued, with steady perseverance, the even tenor of its way, enlarging gradually its sphere of doing good, as it has received a greater measure of the blessing of the Almighty.

At length, Sir, I have followed you to the last paragraph of your reply ; and I have only to add, that really I was most serious in impeaching that simplicity of object, which all the Members of the Bible Society obtrude upon the public, as its irresistible recommendation : and in the words of Mr. Nolan I must beg to enforce my charge, that “ it is with as little consistency as good faith,” that, pledging itself only to distribute Bibles, it circulates, together with them, that vast farrago of adulation to itself, and calumnies upon those who discountenance its proceedings, together with that variety of vain conceits and mischievous imaginations, which those numerous papers contain.

And now, Sir, in taking leave of you in my turn, I beg to assure you, that “ of very faithfulness” have I remonstrated with you in those strong

terms, which you deem to be a trespass beyond the bounds of moderation. I beg of you to recollect, that I am not the aggressor, but that you committed the first act of hostility against me. For here am I placed in a post of responsibility, not only to maintain the faith once delivered to the Saints, but to prevent, to the utmost of my power, the bond of Christian Unity from being broken. Upon the most mature deliberation, and in company with an host of the best and ablest men this country can produce, it is my conscientious conviction, that the association, which, within my cure, you desire to establish, will have a most baneful influence upon both parts of the aforesaid trust confided to my care. How am I, under such circumstances, to exonerate myself from blame, but by the course which I have taken?

My first address was conceived in the most soothing terms, but what was its reception? The introductory passage of your reply gave me to understand, that you had scarcely deigned to take it into consideration. From exhortation therefore I proceeded to reproof; and if you will consider my reprehensions as delivered, not in my private, but in my official character, you will admit, I am persuaded, that I have said nothing which misbecame my place and the occasion. With that boldness, Sir, which a sense of duty inspires, "I have told

“ you the truth,” according to my most deliberate conviction. “ Count me not your enemy “ for having done so;” but allow me to represent myself as rather entitled to your respect for having, not *inordinately*, but *within mine own proper sphere*, withstood you manfully to your face, in defence of what appear to me to be THE VITAL INTERESTS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

I have the honour to be, &c.

Grove Street,
Nov. 9th, 1813.

LETTER VI.

FROM J. W. FRESHFIELD, ESQ. TO
REV. H. H. NORRIS.

SIR,

REFERRING to the date of my last Letter, I had hoped our correspondence, on a subject on which we are so directly opposed to each other, was at an end; but I find myself called upon to answer another very long Letter of your's, just received.

The inconvenience attendant upon this obligation occasions no part of my regret; but when I consider again and again the matter of your Letter, I find it like an ignis fatuus, constantly leading in directions not tending to the object; and if I stop where it most usually rests, I shall find myself engaged about forms and shadows, and neglecting the substance ^a.

^a The justice of this introductory remark is submitted to the decision of the reader; who is earnestly desired, in the perusal of the above Letter, not to receive railing for refutation; and if the arguments, adduced in the preceding pages, have appeared to him substantial, and to the purpose, not to assent too hastily to the unsupported proscription of them as "forms and shadows."

My confidence is in the proposition for which I contend, i. e. That the Scriptures, being the Word of God, are designed for all men, and therefore that all Men ought to be in possession of them. Your Letter proceeds upon an assertion, and which you endeavour to prove, that “ the best means of promoting edification,” is “ a question of Theology,” and belongs to the Clergy as “ accredited practitioners” in divinity. I own, considering the great importance of the real object in view, (the circulation of the Bible), your argument appears comparatively immaterial^b, and to use the language

^b Mr. Freshfield has here involved himself in rather an awkward dilemma, for he has placed in opposition to each other “ the circulation of the Bible” and “ the best means of promoting edification” by it; and he has represented the one as “ of great importance” and the other as “ comparatively immaterial,” as “ a fringe most respectfully distant from the true question.”

That the only *Christian* end of “ circulating the Bible” is the “ promoting of Edification,” or in other words the building up mankind in our most holy faith, is a position which will support itself: but that, in order to “ promote edification,” it must be applied to that purpose by those who, amongst other designations, are denominated in Scripture “ Ministers of the Word,” and are accordingly recognized in our Articles as “ the Witnesses and Keepers of Holy Writ,” though a point *in itself* equally clear with the foregoing, requires, would the nature of these strictures admit of it, further investigation; so completely have the Bible Society contrived to bewilder, in

of Dr. Clarke, "it is really as if, while the light of
" Revelation, no longer concealed within the ark

their labyrinth of words, the judgment of many persons upon the subject. A passage in the Homilies may however be cited, as evidence that our Reformers considered an *authorized* interpreter so obviously a Divine appointment for clearing up as well the real as the adventitious difficulties of Scripture; and as so indispensable for that purpose, that the allegation of this appointment was at once the argument with which they combated the Popish innovation of closing the Sacred Volume against the unlearned members of the Church, lest they should abuse the glorious privilege, and "wrest it to their own destruction;" (2 Pet. iii. 16.) and at the same time the encouragement with which they urged the lower orders to the devout searching of these Sacred Records; not hesitating to pronounce, that if in the course of God's providence "the Priest's lips—the ordinary preserver of knowledge" (Malachi ii. 7.) could not be resorted to, the extraordinary method would infallibly be supplied—that of immediate Divine illumination*.

* "The Scripture is full, as well of low valleys, plain ways, and easie for every man to use, and to walk in : As also of *high hills and mountains which few men can climb unto*. And whosoever giveth his mind to Holy Scriptures, with diligent study and burning desire, it cannot be (saith St. Chrysostom) that he should be left *without help*. For either God Almighty will send him some *godly Doctor* to teach him, as he did to instruct the Eunuch, a noble man of Ethiope, and treasurer unto Queen Candace, who having affection to read the Scripture (although he understood it not) yet for the desire that he had unto God's word, God *sent his Apostle Philip* to declare unto him the true sense of the Scripture that he read; or else, if we *lack a learned Man* to instruct and teach us, yet God himself from above will give light

“ of a particular sanctuary, is permitted to irradiate the nations of the Earth, a question should

The fact is, that this “ comparative immaterialness ” of the priesthood, palmed as it now is upon the Church of England, and unblushingly promulgated as its doctrine, is no other than the conceit of those who have separated from it. “ The scheme (says Mr. Nolan) in which they (the Dissenters) have contrived to engage our co-operation, embraces the whole of their interest, while it excludes an essential part of our own. In the ostensible object, to which our common operations are directed, viz. the diffusion of Religious Knowledge, and the conversion of mankind (that is, in Mr. F.’s language, “ the saving “ souls from eternal perdition ”) they find no use for more than the Bible, whilst *upon its authority* we find also a use for a Ministry *duly qualified and Ordained*. In joining them in any scheme, when the latter is not merely overlooked, but the former deemed exclusively adequate, we virtually abandon our own principles, and add our sanction to theirs. This is the very advantage for which they have long been on the watch. They retain no respect for our Ministry and Sacraments; they have renounced the one, and shaken off their dependance on the other; and their spiritual pretences induce them to represent both as matters indifferent and ceremonial.” Objections

unto our minds, and teach us those things which are necessary for us, and wherein we be ignorant.” Homily on Knowledge of Holy Scripture, second Part.—The Editor the rather produces this citation, because, from the report of the Speeches at the Hackney Auxiliary Meeting it appears to have been brought forward by a young Divine, to refute (as he alledges) the very position, for embracing which, the considerate reader, if *truly* devoted to the principles of the Reformation, will require no better authority; the interesting and apposite example of the Ethiopian Eunuch, which specifies the “ Apostolical ” character of the interpreter, and which should appear in the midst of the quotation, being omitted.

“ arise, whether it shall be conveyed through the
 “ public portals of the Temple, or by the Gate
 “ belonging only to the Priests’.” However, it is

of a Churchman, p. 45. See more upon the subject, at the close of IX. *Remarks on the Counter-Address, &c.* and App. No. xv. note^d.

^c Such metaphorical language as this (which may be denominated the idiom of the Bible Society) is not well calculated for the conveyance of truth. “ The light of Revelation” was in fact “ never *concealed* within the Ark of any Sanctuary.” If the Editor understands what Dr. C. means, by “ the Ark of the Sanctuary,” it was certainly intended not to “ *conceal*” but to *preserve* the truth. Under every dispensation, Patriarchal, Mosaical, and Christian, the Church has been the only depository of the “ light of Revelation ;” but that light was not so deposited within it, that its brightness might be concealed, but that it might become more conspicuous, and might shine in all its purity. The figurative language of Scripture clearly points out this as the office of the Church, which is described as a Candlestick, in which the light is placed, that it may be secured from extinction ; and that men may see it, and be benefited by it.

Thus Bp. Horne, in his Commentary on the Psalms, illustrates ver. 19 of Psalm cxlvii, a passage very much to our present purpose : That “ *the word* which was shewed unto Jacob, “ and became *the property of Israel, whilst Israel continued the* “ *Church of God*, hath since been made over, with all its types “ realized, and its prophecies accomplished in Jesus, *to the* “ *Church Christian* ; and is that peculiar blessing which *dis-* “ *tinguishes her from the rest of the world*, and for which *her* “ *children* are bound at all times to praise the Lord.”

It is, indeed, very important to caution the reader against the glowing imagery of Dr. Clarke. He may be assured

my task to answer your Letter, and therefore even this fringe, so respectfully distant from the true question, must receive some, though but brief consideration.

After generally premising you wrote "merely to correct the many erroneous conclusions and "misapprehensions" which my Letter contained, you state, that you could not see how the circumstance of the Parish in which you officiate being only a part of the District for which the Auxiliary

that if he searches the Scriptures he will find it what, in St. Paul's figure, may be described as "the hay and stubble" of the Dr.'s own imagination; which, in the enthusiasm of his zeal for the cause which he had in hand, he has been betrayed into the rearing upon a Scriptural foundation: not sufficiently considering the danger of profaning the symbols of Scripture by the most obvious perversion, and of building with them thus prostituted upon holy ground; and it is hoped, overlooking also the depreciation of his own order, which his similitude conveys: a parallel to which is handed to him from the pen of Dr. Priestley, who, taking a comparative view of the two Universities, and Dissenting Establishments for education, describes the former, in consequence of the precautions taken by them for "conveying religious instruction (to adopt the Doctor's figure) through the gate belonging to the Priests," as "resembling pools of stagnant water secured by dams and mounds, and *offensive to the neighbourhood;*" whilst the latter, free from these obstructions, "are like rivers which, taking their *natural course, fertilize a country.*" Letter to Mr. Pitt, p. 32.

Bible Society is proposed to be established, “affected in the least the weight of your objection.” I therefore answer, that the District described has no necessary connection with any Parish, as a Parish, it includes the intire of two Parishes and part of one other, (I believe of two others :) it is therefore clear of any ecclesiastical head, and if rightly considered, cannot intitle the Parochial Clergy in any one Parish to “deprecate the proceeding” because in opposition to their opinion ; nor would all the Clergy within the district be so intitled, though it is not yet ascertained that all concur in doing so : however, it is enough for my original proposition that the objection founded upon the opinion of the Parochial Clergy at *Hackney* is materially weakened thereby ^d.

^d This is speaking out *plainly*—the only boon which those, who view with lively apprehension the proceedings of the Bible Society, have to ask of its advocates. Let the reader treasure up this declaration in his mind, that one part of the reformation to be wrought by that Society is to “clear” all the parishes in the kingdom “of their *Ecclesiastical Heads* :” it is “to save souls from eternal perdition,” (to refer again to Mr. Freshfield’s statement. Vide Appendix, No. 9.) in a new method which “DOES NOT COME WITHIN EITHER PAROCHIAL, PASTORAL, OR EPISCOPAL JURISDICTION.” This considerate men have perceived and laid to its charge long ago ; but we have now got a distinct avowal of it from one of the founders of the confederacy ; who does not hesitate to tell a Parochial Clergyman that, in consequence of the for-

I have yet to learn how “ the manner in which
 “ the Scriptures are distributed by the Bible So-
 “ ciety is far from being calculated to promote
 “ the proper end of their distribution, the disse-
 “ mination of Christian knowledge,”—or how

mation of a *new auxiliary district* of the Bible Society, in which his Parish is included, he is no longer “ entitled” even “ to deprecate proceedings” which in his conscience he believes to be most prejudicial, in their effects, to the spiritual welfare of his parishioners ; and which moreover he conceives himself to be bound by his Ordination vows, not merely to protest against, but, if possible, “ to banish and to drive away.” What an arrogation of supremacy is here!!! A handful of private individuals convene a meeting, erect themselves into what they are pleased to call “ a Provisional Committee,” and, without farther ceremony, proceed to obliterate ancient landmarks, to dissolve constituted authorities, and according to their own caprice to circumscribe a tract of country as a territory for themselves ; and then, having given it the denomination of “ a District,” in the plenitude of their usurped sovereignty, proclaim that “ no necessary connection” subsists between it “ and any Parish as a Parish,” which lies within its boundary, in any of those concerns which they have thought proper to take under their superintendence and controul. The cautious veterans, who direct in secret the campaigns of the Society, will surely deem Mr. Freshfield’s developement premature. The work indeed is proceeding systematically throughout the country ; but then the Bible, held up before our eyes, lulls all our circumspection to rest, and under cover of it the engineers advance in confidence and security, reorganizing the kingdom, and superseding its venerable establishments.

° *Has* Mr. Freshfield volunteered his services to “ rescue

“ it has a direct tendency to degrade the sacred
“ volume in the eyes of the people, and so to lessen

“ souls from eternal perdition,” and “ has he yet to learn” how ill calculated the distributing Bibles divested of “ *notes and comments,*” is to effect this benevolent design amongst those who are the special objects of the Bible Society’s care, the ignorant and the uninstructed? Has he yet to learn, that men may have the Scriptures in their possession, and not only so, but may have acquired such a familiarity with the sacred text as constantly to speak in Scripture phraseology, and yet may err for lack of knowledge of them; and may die in their sins in consequence of their error? Has he yet to learn, that their saving efficacy is not in the “ letter,” but is vested exclusively in the “ spirit” of them, and therefore in their true interpretation, and that this true interpretation is set forth by means of “ *notes and comments,*” some of them handed down to us from the Apostolic age, through a succession of faithful men¹, and others subsequently produced by those who have searched diligently what the Spirit designed to signify in the Sacred Records, patiently comparing spiritual things with spiritual², and so limiting all their determinations as to preserve inviolate the proportion of faith³? And finally, has he yet to learn that whilst, through its distributing so defectively the means of knowledge, the system which he espouses is scarcely capable of leading the uninstructed to the Truth; the making the distribution through the instrumentality of a mixed multitude of Sectarists of every denomination, directly tends to lead them into error, nay, worse than this, into indifference to every religious opinion, and finally into unbelief? If Mr. Freshfield does not know these things, “ though for the time” he may,

¹ 2 Tim. ii. 2.

² 1 Cor. ii. 13.

³ Rom. xii. 6.

“ its practical influence upon their minds.” Your Letter contains the assertion, and it also asserts, “ that Bibles are prophaned to the basest purposes, “ being hawked about by Jew boys amongst their “ contemptible merchandize, being in use at cheese- “ mongers to wrap up their articles of traffic, and “ being bartered at the gin-shop for the means of “ intoxication;” but I do not discover any proof in support of either assertion^f. To take the latter first, I would ask how, if Bibles are so misused, do you distinguish them to be copies proceeding from the British and Foreign Bible Society, and if

think himself qualified to be a “ Teacher, he has need that some one should teach him again which be the *first principles* of the Oracles of God⁴,” and he has further need to be reminded of our Saviour’s awful warning to those who “ took “ away the key of knowledge” in his days; that if the “ blind “ lead the blind, both shall fall into the pit⁵.”

^f These instances of the prophanation of the Scriptures are supported by authorities which the Editor had stated at length. But the proceedings of the Court of Common Council, (vid. Morning Chronicle, Jan. 15th, 1813,) have rendered this unnecessary, as what is charged upon the Bible Society in the above passage is recognized in these proceedings as a *glaring fact*, and appears to have chiefly influenced the decision of the Court to reject the motion for making to that Society an additional grant of £200, the Editor therefore deems his position sufficiently established, and gladly spares the reader an uninteresting detail.

⁴ Heb. v. 12.

⁵ Matt. xv. 14.

so, what proportion do they bear to the immense number (nearly half a million) circulated by that Society? And again, is it to be contended, that because in the distribution of so many, a few unworthy objects have become possessed of a treasure they did not know how to estimate, that therefore it is to be charged upon the Society as an objection to the principle of its proceeding? Again, would it not be a reasonable exercise of charity to suppose, that amongst so great a number of the poorest class of society, some from the extreme of indigence have been compelled to sell even this invaluable book? and why was not this objection equally charged upon former means of distribution? You must remember to have seen copies of the Scripture in great numbers, both ordinary and curious copies, at the shops of pawnbrokers many years before the Bible Society was established, and yet it never occurred to any one to argue thence, that there were too many Bibles in circulation, or that those who distributed them brought the Scriptures into disrepute^z.

^z In order to implicate the Bible Society in the prophana-
tion charged upon it above, it is not necessary to prove that
the Bibles sold are those issued from its repository. If the
zeal, with which its agents labour to accumulate evidence of
the nakedness of the land in this respect, impresses the poor
with a belief that they *wish* to find the deficiency after which
they are enquiring, that *wish* will seldom be disappointed.

To go back to your first assertion, the best answer is to refer you to the numerous testimonies

The poor will be tempted to secrete the *old* Bibles which they formerly revered, by the hope of obtaining a *new* one from the Society; and those who have employed artifice and falsehood to acquire the Sacred Volume will seldom be very scrupulous in parting with it. In some cases therefore the old one, in others the new one will become an object of the disgraceful traffic particularized in the Correspondence; and the Society will become justly chargeable with the consequences which its own ill-regulated and indiscriminate bounty has produced. That this is no groundless surmise, three facts can be alleged to testify, which, without any enquiry on the part of the Editor, have been brought to his knowledge, as having occurred in this Parish in the course of the inquisition among the poor as to their want of Bibles. In one instance, a woman letting out apartments, knowing all her lodgers to be provided, answered for them that they were so: and she had no sooner thus dismissed the enquirers than she was severely reprehended by one of those inmates for having prevented her from obtaining a second copy by divulging what she would have concealed. In another, the possession of a Bible was acknowledged, but after much questioning a confession was extorted that the print was small; upon which it was suggested that for a small sum one of larger print would be furnished, and the name of the candidate was enrolled in the list of deficiency. In the third, a lie was told and succeeded. A woman, who was in possession of a good Bible, denied having one, and was enrolled. Her husband publicly stated her successful falsehood, concluding his statement with the declaration, that it would sell for *waste paper*. To these three another may be subjoined, of a woman's undergoing a species of persecution; being beset in succession by three de-

of positive good effected by means of the Bibles distributed by the Society, and which you will find referred to in the publications of its proceedings, which prove that "the proper end" is attained, that "Christian knowledge" is disseminated, which I apprehend is to honor, and not "degrade the sacred volume." Nor can I admit, that to make the poor acquainted with the Scriptures, is likely "to lessen its practical influence upon their minds^h."

putations of Sectaries of different denominations, who would scarcely take any refusal, though she told them all, that she was already provided with a Bible; and that had she wanted one, she would go to the Editor, on whose ministrations she attended, who, she knew, would readily supply it. These are instances which have all been *obluded* upon the Editor's notice; there can be little doubt, therefore, that they would be multiplied exceedingly by enquiry. It is further set up in defence of the Society, that Bibles have been *heretofore* sold. This is admitted, but it is subjoined that till now they were never hawked about *as waste paper*.

^h If the reader examines "the testimonies" referred to, he will find statement upon statement of strong desire expressed to obtain possession of Bibles, and of great joy and thankfulness on receiving them. But Bibles are not charms—neither the possession nor the perusal of them does of necessity produce "Christian knowledge;" for "Christian knowledge" and Christian truth have been shewn (note ^c) to be synonymous expressions, and this deduction has been drawn from thence, that "Christian knowledge" can only be "disseminated," in the case of the ordinary objects of

Notwithstanding the very labored argument you have produced, I must continue to think that the

gratuitous distribution, by accompanying the sacred text with its true interpretation—that interpretation which at all times, and in all places, has been held by all the faithful members of the Universal Church,—that these “numerous testimonies” therefore, alledged as demonstrative of positive good, effected “by means of the Bibles distributed by the Society,” are so in reality, is a completely gratuitous assumption; nay, an assumption, under the circumstances under which that distribution is conducted, so very questionable, that the obvious conclusion from the data, which we have to reason upon, is directly the reverse, viz. that, in the case above stated, it is much more likely to be prejudicial than advantageous, inasmuch as those circumstances give such an obliquity to the religious instruction which it communicates, as must render that instruction rather conducive to “the causing” the *simple* “to err from the words of knowledge” than to the instilling true wisdom into their hearts.

There are only two objects for which men can legitimately congregate in a *religious* association; and these are brought together by the Psalmist, when celebrating the praises of Jerusalem he sets forth this as one of the causes of its being “a city at unity in itself,” that “thither the tribes went up to testify to Israel, and to give thanks to the name of the Lord².” Now it is remarkable, that from the prosecution of both these objects the Bible Society is by its very constitution excluded; for were it to begin “testifying to Israel,” as it is recorded to have happened at the Theatre at Ephesus, and as, notwithstanding all the address, concession, and explanation which have been called in to prevent it, has been upon

¹ Prov. xix. 27.

² Ps. cxxii. 4.

opposition of the Parochial Clergy ought not to determine the question; first, because this is a

the very point of happening at Leicester *, at Norwich, and at Hackney, some would cry one thing and some another, the assembly would become confused, and the greater part would not soon know wherefore they were come together ³. Indeed, so sensible of this is one of its zealous advocates, that in the most unqualified language, and with a significant, but not very complimentary reference to "the builders of Babel," he predicts its "downfall the moment it attempts, by adding a particle of note or comment," to give that "distinction" to the words of Scripture, which, in the case of the peculiar objects of gratuitous distribution is indispensable, according to St. Paul's irresistible reasoning ⁴, to prepare it for delivering an intelligible testimony, and for "edifying the Church." (Ward's Letter to Dr. Gaskin, p. 37.)

For "testifying unto Israel" then, the first Divinely prescribed object of religious association, the Bible Society is completely disqualified; and so sensible were its founders of its constitutional disqualification for engaging in the other, "the giving thanks to the Name of the Lord," that they did not venture to suggest the propriety of the Society's ever joining in any act of devotion. In the two Church Societies, which together have prosecuted, for above a century, all that

* The Apple of Discord at Leicester, was an unfortunate testimony of commendation to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, borne by the venerable Dean of Middleham, at the Anniversary Meeting of the Auxiliary Bible Society there on the 18th of April, 1812, which very greatly disturbed the harmony of the meeting, and would have had so awkward an appearance in print, that all mention of it was suppressed in the account of the proceedings. For an account of the other instances above specified, see Preliminary Observations to App. No. X.

³ Acts xix. 32.

⁴ 1 Cor. xiv. 7.

question not of form, compliment, or etiquette, but of principle—one upon which the Parochial Clergy of Hackney have no better means of judg-

is beneficial both in the domestic and foreign designs of this rival Institution, prayer always precedes and terminates their deliberations; and therefore here was a precedent, to which, it might have been very reasonably expected, that those who discover so strong a propensity to appropriate piety to themselves would have done homage, in the formation of their code of laws, and would not only have adopted it, but have brought it prominently forward, as a regulation of indispensable and prime importance. But it was sagaciously foreseen that the mixed multitude of Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists, Quakers, Socinians, &c. (who were to exhibit that phenomenon to the world which the Prophet Amos⁵ deemed without the bounds of possibility, and “were to walk “together” retaining all the while their several contrarieties of opinion,) could be induced by no consideration “to agree “on earth” either as “touching what they should ask of “their Father in heaven⁶,” or as touching the manner of asking it; but that the fiercest contentions would arise the moment any one of the motley confederation should hazard the presumptuous attempt to entrench so far upon the Christian liberty of his brethren as to call them to join with him in his devotions. This dilemma therefore was inevitable, either the project must be abandoned altogether, or it must be prosecuted without prayer to God for its success; and should it succeed, without any return of thanks to Him for its prosperous issue. The latter alternative prevailed, and thus have we a Religious Society already found incapable of testifying to the truth, and now convicted of the further incapacity of

⁵ Amos iii. 8.

⁶ Mat. xviii. 19.

ing than other Clergymen connected with the parish as Lecturers or otherwise, and other Clergymen within the district who support the measure.— Secondly, because it is not even contended by you, that the measure can be right at Cambridge and not at Woodford, or right at Enfield and wrong in Hackney, and therefore the inhabitants of this district have a right to examine the ground of the opposition, and weigh it against the conduct and opinions of other Clergymen similarly connected with other districts. And thirdly, because this is not a question of Theology, but, according to my belief, of plain, obvious, positive, moral obligation binding upon every Christian ^k.

supplicating the Divine blessing upon its undertakings, and in the face of this, making haughty and imposing claims to having devised “the most probable means” of spreading the Gospel of Christ.

^k Does Mr. Freshfield mean that no deference is due to the judgment of the Parochial Clergy upon “questions of principle;” but only upon those of “form, compliment, and etiquette?” If so, how necessary and useful must the Divinely constituted Order of the Priesthood appear in that gentleman’s estimation? But no sooner has he taken the question out of their cognizance, and driven them out of court, than he brings them back again to wage amongst themselves a war of unavailing words, and proceeds to balance, one against the other, their contending opinions. To what purpose is this, except it be to cast scorn upon a conscientious Pastor of a Parish by a triumphant display of that compleat prostration of Ecclesiastical Authority, which

Before I proceed further upon this part of your Letter, I must be allowed, once for all, to state,

the auxiliary system has been for several years most insidiously employed to accomplish, and which Mr. F. considers so nearly effected that he speaks of it in the beginning of his Letter as if it were now established by law? But Mr. F. should know, that the Church, though its enemies are "compassing it on every side," is not yet disfranchised of that system of discipline, by which the limits of its several Ministries are defined. "Lecturers," those excrescences upon our Ecclesiastical Establishment which Puritanism produced, having nothing else to do than to preach their afternoon sermon, and to read prayers twice a year, if so required, in proof of their conformity, have no cure of souls in a Parish, and therefore have neither the means of judging, nor authority to deliver any judgment upon the present question; and Pastors of Parishes themselves, when they so far forget their own character as to intermeddle in any spiritual concerns without the limits of their charge, only invoke their Ecclesiastical Superiors to inflict that penalty, which St. Peter has awarded against all "αλλοτριεπισκοπους," "Busy Bodies in other men's matters:" and which St. Paul has specified to be that "their mouths must be stopped," lest they "subvert" that venerable fabric, which they are under the most solemn obligations to uphold. When the Kingdom is re-organised, and the Bible Society's new District map published by authority, then its Managing Committee may form a new Ordinal to correspond with this new order of things, and may make to themselves Priests of whom they please. But at present the confusion which Mr. F. would introduce is premature, and we trust that through

¹ 1 Pet. iv. 15.

² Titus i. 11.

that I neither assert nor entertain the opinion, "that the national Clergy are indiscriminately both ignorant and disqualified for the management of the weighty concerns of their profession;" on the contrary, I know and admire many of them as eminently qualified for every duty to which they can be called, and consider them among the main stays and props of the kingdom; and I have no doubt, there are to be found many such in every part of the island; and if I had no other knowledge upon the subject than that afforded by the proceedings of the different Auxiliary Bible Societies, I should consider the fact sufficiently established, and I am sorry that you should find any difficulty in divesting your correspondence of insinuations¹, (as against me and others,) of this

the quiet good sense of Englishmen, under the superintendence of the good Providence of God, it will never take effect.

¹ That the "insinuation" here complained of, which was conveyed in the most inoffensive manner in which language could express it, is not without foundation, proof is in Mr. Freshfield's own possession; if he has retained a transcript of his correspondence with Dr. Gaskin; as, unless the Editor's recollection is more treacherous than he believes it to be, Mr. F. will find himself to have deliberately declared, in the course of that correspondence, "that *it was so obviously true that the defection from the Church was owing to the too general indifference of the Clergy, that it was both defensible and fair to reason upon it as a fact.*" and it is sub-

description, which lead to length and digression, and do not prove any thing connected with the subject.

You consider the opinion of Divines upon a question of Theology intitled to the same consideration that I would claim to my opinion upon a matter of law ; this you consider a parallel case, and call upon me “ to point out the difference between our “ respective professions.” I am content to take your own illustration. If I maintained an opinion upon a point of law, in direct opposition to very many able and experienced practitioners ; further, if my opinion happened to be opposed by those of several learned Judges, I could not consider it an offence offered to me that the opposite opinion should be preferred ; if I did, I should degrade my own judgment by the exercise of presumption and vanity,—and as you consider the cases parallel, I only need remind you, that a very numerous body of the Clergy, of acknowledged reputation, and of the Ecclesiastical Judges, and heads of the Church, have promoted, and are supporting Auxiliary Bible Societies, founded upon the same precise plan, which the Parochial Clergy of Hackney

mitted to his own decision, whether what the Editor so dubiously conjectured as possibly Mr. F.’s opinion, reflects more severely upon the objects of it, than what is here charged upon them by him without any qualification.

think it their duty to oppose ; it is therefore not asking much when we claim, with these directly opposite opinions before us, to judge which of the two sentiments we should adopt^m.

^m The force of this parallel, as drawn out by Mr. F., resolves the question between himself and the Editor, as to which of them the charge of “ degradation of judgment, of “ presumption and vanity ” attaches, into the preponderance of the weight of suffrage in favor of the Bible Society, and against it. To this decision the Editor can have no objection to submit the case : but as Mr. F. has added new particulars to the parallel, which were not in the contemplation of his correspondent ; to make it apposite in its extended state, he should have been a little more comprehensive still, and should have associated his professional referees with Messrs. Hunt and Finnerty, and any other Legal Heretics which this self-opinionated and licentious age has produced : and he should have specified, moreover, the point upon which they were at issue with their more narrow-minded brethren ; that it was, whether Elementary Treatises, and Precedents, and indeed Lawyers themselves, were not antiquated appendages to the Statute Book, the pure unmixed text of which these new luminaries considered much better calculated to spread the knowledge of law, and to subdue the human heart into obedience to its decisions, than when encumbered with Notes and Comments, and Advocates, to confine its meaning within prescribed limits, and to harmonize its numerous enactments into one consistent interpretation. Nay, further, he should have stated that the case at present at issue between himself and his correspondent, and in support of which he had cited the authority of these new luminaries of law, had this further specialty belonging to it, that it hinged,

I have here, you observe, assumed, in considering your argument, that the question on which we differ is one of Theology; but I must not be supposed to concede that point, and if my proposition is right, that this is no question of Theology, but of moral duty, then your reasoning upon a supposed exclusive right of judgment, fails upon that ground.

But in the strain of exultation with which most of your sentences conclude, you desire me to search the Scriptures, the letter of which I am under such an "impulse" to disperse. You have not condescended to assist my search, and I do not apprehend you intend to refer me to 1 Thess. v. 21. "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good."

not upon the question of the *expediency* of introducing these improvements into those Courts and Circuits in which the infatuation in favour of them prevailed, but upon the *right* which these Novellists arrogated to themselves of *forcing* them upon those, whose Officers protested against the innovation; nay, of cramming them down the throats of all the Chief Justices and Puisne Judges of the Realm. The outline of the parallel having thus had its deficiencies supplied is referred back to Mr. Freshfield for reconsideration; and when he has drawn it out at length, which from concern for the Reader the Editor omits, it is submitted to himself to decide to whom the reproach of "presumption and vanity" is due.

The precedent adduced of the late Bishop of London is more applicable than you are willing to admit, and to give you back your own argument, it will stand thus; that to oppose the Bible Society is right, because the present Diocesan sanctions the opposition, and of course if hereafter another Diocesan should think "proper authoritatively to recommend" the Society, it would become your duty to support it; so that the value of the measure is to be found not in the principle, but in the persons recommending its adoption or opposition, and that a conduct less subservient would be considered a rising against those who have a right "to seat themselves in their own chair and to claim respect to what they say".

ⁿ Mr. Freshfield has forgotten that the argument from authority is not the Editor's, but his own. The Editor absolutely disclaims it; and together with all those who view with apprehension the progress of the Bible Society, desires nothing more earnestly than that the managing Committee of that Institution would suffer it to undergo the ordeal which is, as Mr. F. most justly intimates, the only true criterion of excellence, and divesting it of the imposing influence which splendid patronage confers, would submit it to be fairly weighed by its own intrinsic merits, and either to be established or dissolved as these merits should preponderate or be found wanting. But what is the course of proceeding constantly pursued when the formation of a new Auxiliary Society is in agitation? In the first place, to set about securing the names of every person of consideration

It is asked by you whether because “ Bishop
 “ Porteus approved of the original institution of

either from his rank or property within the district ; and to obtain this object, the most injurious, and I might add, the most unjustifiable expedients are resorted to. If, in the conception of the canvassers, the person to be gained is indisposed to afford pecuniary support, he is given to understand that his money is not wanted, and that he may become very instrumental in serving God by that which will cost him nothing * ; if he is a man of retired habits, or full of occupation in his own concerns, the intimation is, that no attendance will be required, and that he may contribute very considerably towards spreading the Gospel, without making the irksome sacrifice of personal exertion † ; if popularity is his ruling passion, the political ascendancy of the Society is enlarged upon, and it is demonstrated to him that its influence can turn the tide of public opinion either in his favour or against him : In short, a compleat political index is formed of all the nobility, magistracy and gentry of the proposed district, their characters are studied, the avenues to their hearts explored, they are personally solicited with an importunity which will scarcely accept a denial, and by persons gained over from their connections, and selected to be sent as suitors to them, as being those they least know how to refuse. In some instances where corporate bodies are to be gained, the members

* In the Eighth Report of the British and Foreign Bible Society there are above twenty Vice-Presidents of Auxiliary Societies, whose names do not appear in their respective subscription lists, nor in the general subscription list of the Society.

† The Editor has seen a letter from a person of great consideration in the Bible Society, and most zealously active in promoting its extension, to a Peer, whom it was of great importance to procure, conceived in terms very similar to the above.

“ the Bible Society, it therefore follows he would
 “ approve of its present proceedings.” I answer

are canvassed separately, and by a convenient adoption of a Rhetorical Prolepsis, are each assured of his brethren's concurrence, and thus one by one the whole fraternity is gained *. And when it has been deemed important to secure the countenance of a particular individual, and it has been known that all solicitation would be vain, there are instances of possession being taken of him without asking his consent, and of the advantage of his sanction being thus secured at the first appeal to public feeling in behalf of the design without giving him the opportunity of protesting against it. A second thought then bestowed upon this passage would surely have caused the impolicy of suffering so disparaging a reflection upon the argument from authority to go forth, to flash upon Mr. Freshfield's mind; for to *this* argument the Bible Society is more indebted for its success than to any other expedient which it has put in motion. And its advocates are so sensible of this, that from the Rt. Hon. the President down to the orators of the lowest description who bestow their eloquence upon the Society †, all universally din *this* argu-

* The Editor has an authentic document in his possession of a recent detection and discomfiture of this device by some of the Magistracy of the County.

† “ It has received the sanction of ROYALTY, the support of PRELACY, the patronage of NOBILITY.” (Vide Address to Parishioners of Hackney, App. No. 6.) The first *absolutely false*, for neither the KING, nor the REGENT, have given their sanction to the Bible Society; and the term ROYALTY applies only to them. The second *partially false*, for PRELACY is a comprehensive term, describing the whole Bench of Bishops, seven of whom only in this kingdom out of twenty-six have lent to the Society their names; and the latter, for the same reason *completely hyperbolical*, but to what extent, the Editor has not time to ascertain.

in the affirmative, because that ever to be revered Prelate was a consistent Man, and as the proceedings of the Society are at present perfectly consistent with the original institution, it follows that he would approve them °.

ment in our ears, and the sound of it has scarcely subsided in one part of the country, than it is clamoured forth in another, and echoed and re-echoed by reports of speeches and every other channel of conveyance, till the very air we breathe is infected with it, and the very friends of the Society begin to nauseate the tiresome recitative. There is however a counterpoise to the weight of this argument, which the Society with more prudence than honesty has most studiously concealed, but which the public ought to be in possession of, as indispensable to the due appreciation of its value. It displays with numerical exactness, as the frontispiece of all its proceedings, the titles and dignities which it has gained over for their decoration, but a profound silence is observed with reference to *every rejected application*, because were these recorded, they would not merely neutralise the operation of those in which it had been successful, but they would turn the force of the argument completely against it. The reader however may easily supply the deficiency for himself; he has only to take the Red Book, and to extract from it all the names which are not registered in the Reports of the Society, and he may depend upon it he will not be far wrong in his calculation if he sets them down as designating persons whose patronage the Society has sought to obtain, but who have returned to their solicitation an absolute refusal. For more interesting particulars relative to this argument, the reader is referred to Appendix No. 9. Note (q.)

° This is begging a very important question, and ought to excite the jealousy of such as are invited to lend their names

But still further to remove your doubts, respecting the continued approbation of the Bishop of

to the Bible Society; who, when they have once committed themselves, must go all lengths with it; for it is in possession it seems of an amalgamating menstruum, by which it can reduce into one uniform course of proceeding projects which bear no affinity to each other; and thus it leaves to those who have once associated themselves with it, no way to escape, except by the reputed sacrifice of their consistency. Who would have thought that the parcelling out the country into new districts, and the superseding, by means of self-constituted Provisional Committees, the Pastoral superintendence of the Clergy over those committed to their care, would be openly avowed to be so “*perfectly* consistent with the “original institution” of the Bible Society, that a Prelate, to maintain his consistency, should be declared pledged to continue to it under these circumstances that approbation which he at the first bestowed? In the Taunton Courier of Dec. 3d, 1812, a further developement is made of the plans of the Society; for the different towns in the County are invited by advertisement to send *delegates* to represent them at a County meeting to be convened for the purpose of considering of the best means of furthering its important objects. Does this come within the dilating compass of its consistency? and is the consistency of all the members pledged to approve it? These questions deserve grave consideration. In the mean time the caveat is renewed in behalf of the late Bishop of London, and as the auxiliary system only commenced just previous to his Lordship’s death, and after he was much debilitated by age and infirmities; it is a completely gratuitous assumption, in which the advocates of that system presume to indulge themselves, that it would have met with his concurrence and support; on the contrary,

London, of the proceedings of the Society, allow me to transcribe for your information, a few passages from his life by the Rev. Robert Hodgson, in which his Biographer says, “ It does I confess
 “ appear to me, that no one argument has yet been
 “ advanced against the British and Foreign Bible
 “ Society, which can at all be considered as proof
 “ that it has any secret views injurious to the in-
 “ terests of the Established Church, *or that it has*
 “ *in the slightest degree deviated from the original*
 “ *exclusive purpose* to which in the face of the world
 “ it stands most solemnly pledged. The charge hi-
 “ therto rests upon suspicion and surmise; and there
 “ must be some better and stronger evidence be-
 “ fore I can bring myself to condemn an institution
 “ of which the Bishop, in conjunction with many
 “ other excellent and distinguished Men, enter-
 “ tained so high an opinion, and the avowed de-
 “ sign of which is so strictly in unison with the
 “ labours and the spirit of the Christian Minis-
 “ try.”

from the manner in which, on all occasions, he maintained the authority and influence of the Parochial Clergy; there is every reason to conclude that he would have been the first to protest against a measure so obviously calculated to invalidate that authority and influence, and gradually to effect its extinction. Especially in such a case as that of Newington and Hackney, where the Clergy were unanimous in withstanding it.

This was the opinion of the Rev. Mr. Hodgson in 1811, and I do not assume much when I assert it was the opinion of the good Bishop Porteus when he died in May 1809, or his biographer, who records some very late sentiments of his Lordship upon this subject, would have found it his duty to state any change or alteration of those sentiments ^p.

^p Nothing could have been more unfortunate for Mr. Freshfield than this appeal to the respectable nephew and biographer of Bishop Porteus, or than this citation from his work; for Mr. Hodgson has now publicly renounced his connection with the Bible Society; and has assigned as his reason for doing so, that “no *conscientious clergyman* can continue to act in the dissemination of the Bible with an avowed Socinian, whom the Secretary of that Society at the same time declares that it was *expressly the principle of the Society* to admit.” See Statement of the whole proceeding, App. 217, note ^k.

It is evident then, that neither Mr. Hodgson, nor in his opinion, the good Bishop (for he also was as “conscientious a clergyman” as ever the Church of England produced) did enter into the *depths* of the *fundamental principle* of this specious association. They did not see to what extent it would carry its comprehension; that its purpose was to embrace “the whole family of man” without respect to their *faith or infidelity*; but this is now proclaimed by the Secretary, and still more explicitly by Mr. Thorpe, at Bristol, as always its design. See p. 234.

They did not see, moreover, that it would “interfere” in “the discipline of the Church,” and as “suspicions” and surmises” were assailing their confidence upon this

You express yourself with anxious apprehension lest in giving the late Bishop of London credit for

point, they received, doubtless, from time to time, reiterated assurances from the noble President, to allay any misgivings which were excited, and to lull them again into security; for even subsequent to the death of the good Bishop, that distinguished Peer has declared publicly to the world (see Letter to Dr. Wordsworth, p. 23) that "with the discipline of the Church it does not presume to interfere." But this interference is now become obtrusively obvious, for it literally sets at nought "conscientious, indefatigable Clergymen in their own parishes;" is absolutely obliterating parochial limitations, and by one of its founders and most zealous advocates, is declaring itself exempt from either "*parochial, pastoral, or episcopal jurisdiction*" in all parts of the kingdom, is acting up to its declaration, and (what if the reader had not just seen it under Mr. Freshfield's hand he would scarcely believe) is pronouncing "these proceedings also *perfectly consistent with the original institution,*" and such therefore as Bp. Porteus, *to preserve his consistency,* must approve.

They did not see that it had "secret views injurious to the Church's interest as *established* in these kingdoms;" they looked, as Mr. Hodgson states it, "*at the avowed design*;" the universal circulation of the Bible—a design well characterized by Mr. Nolan, as at once "*splendid and delusive.*" They looked, moreover, as Mr. H. further states, at the "excellent and distinguished men" who gave it their support; and at the undeviating fidelity with which the Society prosecuted "its original exclusive purpose." But those views which were then kept secret, as being in the critical state of recent excogitation, are now far advanced towards maturity, and are promulgated without

sentiments so honorable to himself and the Bible Society, an imputation of inconsistency should be

reserve or qualification. For at the last Anniversary of the Hertford * Auxiliary Meeting, held on Whit-Monday, one of the Speakers made this avowal: That he did not support the Bible Society on the ground usually taken. He did not, nor could he think, that many could believe the Bible to be the work of inspiration; he mentioned the Song of Solomon, and some part of the Gospels as mere human inventions; and then said, that he patronized the Bible Society because he thought IT WOULD 'OVERTHROW THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH. Some disapprobation being expressed at this, another Speaker got up, and declared himself a zealous supporter of the Bible Society, so much so, that he had travelled forty miles to be present at the meeting, but that he would not go one mile to take a stone from a steeple, as he considered that but a SECONDARY object. And at Newington, on the 5th of the present month (July), at a Bible Association (the last disclosed progression of the *Society's original design*, directed specially to the lower orders, for gaining them over to the confederacy, and for spreading amongst them disaffection to the Church) sneers were insinuated by a young Civilian against the Ecclesiastical Head of the Church, and were received by a crowded audience of this class, *particularly females*, with thundering applause; a Clergyman of the Church of England presiding.

* It is a curious fact, which has been communicated to the Editor, that it having been deemed expedient that a preparatory discourse should be preached at Ware, on Whitsunday, by the Rev. Professor Dealtry; the several Dissenting Fraternities at Ware and Hertford, agreed to pay the public compliment to this ardent advocate of the Bible Society, of closing their Meeting Houses in order to attend at Church as part of his congregation.

implied, and that it should be supposed "that his
 " personal and official conduct were in contra-

Lastly, They did not see what effect upon their own body this symbolizing with Sectaries would produce; that as far as the infatuation should spread itself, all pastoral ideas would be extinguished; and that in the place of a Parochial Clergy limiting their spiritual oversight to those *authoritatively* committed to their care, assiduously watching over them, and carrying them on from strength to strength by the Divinely instituted Ministries of the Gospel, a species of itinerancy would be established, and the paramount object of Clerical emulation would become, the pouring forth with fluency at Auxiliary Meetings stimulating provocatives to the indiscriminate circulation of the Bible, and the bringing in the greatest number of proselytes to swell the muster-roll of the Society, and the compassing the largest tract of country for that purpose. But all this is now displayed and gloried in before our eyes; and did not delicacy towards brethren forbid it, such a prostration of pastoral feeling might be exhibited in detail, as would demonstrate how low, in many instances, through the baneful operation of the Bible Society, the character of the *Parish Priest* is fallen. But Mr. Hodgson does now see that, which no one, acquainted with his exemplary discharge of the duties of his laborious cure, will wonder that he had not found leisure earlier to discover; he has obtained that "better
 " and stronger evidence than suspicion and surmise" which he required, and with a manliness which does him the highest honour, he has stood forward publicly, and condemned the Institution as one with which no "*conscientious Member of the Church of England*" can continue associated, and has accordingly broken off the connection.

Out of Mr. Freshfield's own mouth, therefore, may he be condemned for the obloquy which he has endeavoured to fix

‘ diction to each other, and that in the former
 “ capacity he sanctioned measures directly level-
 “ ed at the validity of the commission, which in
 “ the latter he conferred.” I am glad to find you
 have so much regard for the character of that

upon the memory of a departed Prelate, with whose venerable name such unwarrantable liberties are taken; and the faithful witness to whom he has appealed, will testify against him, that Bp. Porteus would have done as his biographer has done; would have renounced the Society, when its destructive tendency was no longer mysterious, when it became evident that the Bible was only its stalking horse, and that, under cover of the sacred volume, it was shaking the very basis of the Church of Christ established in these kingdoms, and sapping the very foundation of the Christian faith.

It must not, however, be forgotten, that some persons more alive to the subtlety of the sons of confusion in these our days, and more at leisure to analyze their devices, and to compare them with the projects of congenial spirits in past ages, and with simultaneous proceedings in other parts of the world, did investigate the plan of the Bible Society at the time it was first put forth, and did warn the country of its tendency and probable results, and the Letter of the Country Clergyman to Lord Teignmouth, published in 1805, if now reperused, will not appear to be the work of “ an obscure re-
 “ cluse, knowing nothing of the world—full of *groundless*
 “ fears for the safety of the Church—and judging both of
 “ men and things without opportunity or ability to form a
 “ correct judgment of either,” but it will be generally admitted to be the reverse of this in every particular—the very counterpart of the evils which have now taken place within nine years of their anticipation.

pious Christian and zealous Churchman, and I hope you will always do justice to his merits; and that I may be the more fortified in ascribing to him that laudable conduct, so alarming to your apprehension, I shall proceed to give you two or three other instances of Bishops, who not only approved the plan of the original Institution, but also the Establishment of Auxiliary Bible Societies; “the parcelling out the country into new departments,” &c.

The first instance is that of the Bishop of Norwich, who accepted the office of President of the Suffolk Auxiliary Bible Society; and in a Letter addressed to the Rev. Mr. Cobbold, requesting him to take the Chair at the General Meeting, his Lordship expressed himself as follows: “I can
“with truth add, that I shall have particular satisfaction in being represented by a Clergyman,
“whose steady and judicious attachment to our
“excellent ecclesiastical establishment renders
“him a peculiarly proper person to promote the
“success of an Institution, *so inseparably connected with the best interests of this Establishment.*”

Add to this the instance of the Lord Bishop of Durham, who accepted the office of President of the Darlington Auxiliary Bible Society.

And as a further proof, you are no doubt aware that another Prelate, who was contemporary with Bishop Porteus, and like him approved the original Institution, has since recommended the Auxiliary Societies, in a Sermon preached in the Cathedral Church of St. Paul's. These facts are too strong to need being further enforced¹.

¹ Upon these detailed and very indelicate citations the Editor has only to observe, that one part of the Bishop's office is to "charge in the Lord" Clergymen presented to him for that purpose "with the cure of the souls of the "parishioners" in the several parishes in his Diocese, "and "with the government" of their respective Churches¹; and that the pith and marrow of the Auxiliary System, as explained by Mr. Freshfield, and as exemplified in the practice of the Auxiliary Associates wherever they fail in beguiling the Clergy to concur in their design, is to "*clear*" these Parishes "*of their Ecclesiastical Heads*:" or to establish a new method "of saving souls from eternal perdition," which (as he expresses it in his Remarks, &c. App. No. 9.) "DOES NOT COME WITHIN EITHER PAROCHIAL, PASTORAL, OR EPISCOPAL JURISDICTION." The Editor merely places these passages in Juxta-position. The problem which rises out of them, he confesses to be too high for him, and he feels a respectful restraint upon his mind, which prevents him from attempting its solution. There is, however, a passage in the Ecclesiastical History of the 4th century, recounting the artifices which those, who were then "greedy of gain and domination," had recourse to for the attainment of their ends, so accurately the coun-

¹ Instrument of Institution.

Your remarks and appeal upon the subject, whether the measure is approved by the inhabitants, do not call for a serious reply; if you had taken half the pains to obtain information upon that point, which you have used to generate suspicion and surmise, you would have been much more accurate in the calculations formed; a very short period will make you acquainted with all “the unknown individuals,” whose proceedings are conducted with so “much privacy”—at a Public Tavern, in the center of Hackney, and who have personally enquired of the poor throughout the District as to their want of the Scriptures and willingness to purchase; and who might therefore with a labour short of “the most diligent investigation” have been discovered*.

terpart of what is here exhibited, that he cannot refrain from subjoining it. It is in a Letter from Alexander Bishop of Alexandria to Alexander Bishop of Constantinople: the Arians are the the subjects of it, and the Bishop says of them as follows:

Ἐπιχείρησαν δὲ περιδρομαῖς χρώμενοι καθ' ἡμῶν, παρεκβαίνειν τοὺς ὁμόφρονας ΣΥΛΛΕΙΤΟΥΡΓΟΥΣ, σχήματι μὲν εἰρήνης καὶ ἐνώσεως ἀξίωσιν ὑποκρινόμενοι, τὸ δὲ ἀληθές, συναρπάσαι τινὰς αὐτῶν εἰς τὴν ἰδίαν νόσον διὰ χηστελογίας σπουδαζούτες· καὶ σταμνλώτερα γράμματα παρ' αὐτῶν αἰτεῦντες, ἵνα παραναγινώσκοντες αὐτὰ τοῖς ὑπ' αὐτῶν ἡπατημένοις, ἀμετανοήτοις ἐφ' οἷς ἐσφάλησαν κατασκευάζωσιν, ἐπιτρίβουμένους εἰς ἀσέβειαν, ὡς ἂν συμψήφους αὐτοῖς καὶ ὁμόφρονας ἔχοντες ἘΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΥΣ. Theodorit. Hist. Eccles. Edit. Reading, Tom. 3. p. 10.

* The period here adverted to, which was to flash con-

I come now to a passage which I had rather not have met with. You say the Inhabitants who

fusion in the Editor's face for having so greatly under-rated the numbers of the inhabitants of Hackney who had constituted themselves a provisional Committee for the formation of an Auxiliary Bible Society in the Parish, that his "appeal" was not deemed "worthy of a serious reply," is at length expired; and so far is he from feeling himself put to shame, that he has the confidence to re-state what is called his undervaluation; and further to assure the Reader, that the terms "unknown individuals," by which he described that Conclave, still continues to be, to the best of his knowledge, and after the most diligent enquiries, the proper designation of its Members; for he has looked for the enumeration of their names through every publication which they have put forth, and has been uniformly disappointed. At the general meeting indeed he did promise himself that his curiosity would be satisfied; but though the gentlemen in question were distinguished by a vote of thanks, awarded to them for the *crambe repetita* which they had dished up for the entertainment of the company, an unaccountable disinclination to exhibit themselves to public view kept them incog. with the exception of one member of their body, even on this triumphant occasion. This statement is made on the authority of the account of the proceedings of the day, which though evidently sent to the Editor of the Times (vid. App. No. 15.) as an article of news, he has perversely *authenticated as official*.

That the proceedings of this Provisional Committee were conducted with much privacy is also re-stated. They held, it is true, their first meeting "at a public Tavern in the centre of Hackney." But nobody knew of this meeting but the persons attending it (who, from information obtained upon the spot, were about twenty in number) and a few other persons who

wait upon the Ministry of the Clergy you *know* from personal "enquiry" so far as you have been able to make it ("the whole of them") "protest also" "themselves against the proceeding." Considering that you describe yourself a plain dealing man, and a liberal interpreter, I must think this a bold assertion, and somewhat unguarded, because you *do personally know* persons of high respectability in the parish of Hackney, who are among the regular and consistent Members of the Established Church, who actively support the plan proposed, and you also personally know others who have not so protested, notwithstanding they have been solicited not

were invited, but declined the invitation. At the close of this meeting, which was held on Friday, Oct. 23, 1812, it was resolved to adjourn to the Monday se'nnight following at the same place, but in the interval, for reasons which have not been suffered to transpire, a more retired Council Chamber was deemed expedient; the answer given at the Tavern to enquiries respecting the Meeting was suddenly altered, and was so expressed as really to beguile the Editor into the indulgence of an hope, that in deference to the earnest entreaties of the Parochial Clergy the project was given up; but after some days he discovered that the sittings of the Committee were only transferred to the house of one of the zealous supporters of the design, and concealment characterised from that time forth all their deliberations. And though it is admitted that the personal enquiry amongst the poor, which Mr. F speaks of, was partially made, yet in the Editor's neighbourhood, the domiciliary visit took place under the shade of darkness.

to subscribe to the intended Society, and you also know, that the publication lately distributed as the act of the vestry, at which you presided, was in fact the act of a very small proportion of that body, and against which it would probably have been easy to record a protest on the part of many more vestrymen than attended your meeting, but the Friends of the Bible Society do not descend to such measures, they rely upon the good sense of the Inhabitants not to be misled by appearances but to judge of the plan by its own intrinsic merit¹.

¹ This triumphant strain of contradiction the Reader might well suppose has strong facts to support it. The Editor, however, re-asserts his impeached affirmation, and without any qualification re-states, that at the time it passed his pen, though he had made personal enquiry in all parts of the parish, he did not know one individual attendant upon the ministry either of the Vicar or his Curates, who did not "protest against the proceeding." He has no wish to conceal that he had previous knowledge that the sentiments of one gentleman answering the description given by Mr. F. were *generally* favourable to the constitution and designs of the Bible Society; but the two questions of *generally* supporting that Society, and *aiding the establishment* of an *Auxiliary* branch of it, appeared to him so distinct, that he deemed it very possible for the same person to be devoted to the one, and at least to observe neutrality to the other; and though he was aware of the high tide to which this gentleman's zeal is apt to be elevated when he has a favourite project in hand, yet he thought he saw on this occasion such an embankment of restraining considerations accumulated around him, as would infallibly set bounds to the most power-

Upon the restatement of your assertion of what
 “ every country newspaper will demonstrate,” I

ful agitations of the animal spirits; and secure his continuance in a state of inactivity, however great revulsions within himself this self-denial might occasion. He had, however, scarcely dispatched his Letter to Mr. F. before he had the mortification to learn that he was mistaken, but till the General Meeting took place he could hear but of one other Churchman in the parish associating himself with him; and the developement which that day produced only added three or four more to the number, whose names, for the most part, the Editor is taught to believe that Gentleman’s influence produced.

Among such a string of charges, *one* surely ought to have some foundation, yet the last count in the indictment, the Editor is concerned to state, is more palpably incorrect than any of the preceding. It is true that at the Vestry, which passed the first resolutions, there was not an attendance of all its Members, but there was the usual attendance, and all were unanimous. It is also true, that in consequence of the Vicar’s absence in the country, and the confinement of the senior Curate to his bed-room, the Editor was in the chair; but that there is no truth in the insinuation, that “ it probably would “ have been easy to record a protest on the part of more Vestrymen than attended this meeting;” if no other evidence could be adduced, the very circumstance that it was *not* recorded would convince any one, who has had the least opportunity of observing the zeal and indefatigable perseverance of Auxiliaries in surmounting every obstacle opposed to the success of their designs. But the first resolutions were followed up by others, and of the intention to move them every Vestryman had special notice, accompanied with a copy of the Vicar’s Letter, (Vid. App. No. 3.), out of which they arose. And of this circumstance it is scarcely possible that Mr. Freshfield

do not find it necessary to comment, as you have not thought it proper to notice “ three pages of “ my reasoning,” which you consider irrelevant, and which without vanity, I must take to myself as a compliment ; for I am confident, had you found it easily refuted, it would have received its share of attention (and for a proof of which I may appeal to the whole tenor of your observations.)

You next suppose me to have *made a degrading* representation of the state of the parishes of Newington and Hackney, but I most solemnly protest against your statement of my Letter and your deductions from it, both of which are most mistaken, (though I am willing to believe not wilful,) perversions. I have not represented the two parishes as containing less of light and respectability than those by which they are surrounded ; but speaking of them, and the others conjointly, as of an enlightened and respectable neighbourhood, I stated as a defence of those who promoted the proposed plan, that they were not unnecessarily forward, as “ other “ Societies of a similar description already formed, “ and others forming, intirely surround the district, “ and would probably in a few days leave it (the

could be ignorant, as the gentleman, to whom it is supposed he alludes as actively supporting the plan, and with whom he was in frequent consultation, is a Vestryman, and received the notice, and yet absented himself from the Meeting,

“ district) an exception,” not as to light or respectability, but as being the only district in a very extensive neighbourhood, without such a Society established within it : I submit therefore to your own candour, whether you have not deviated strangely from (what appears to me) a most obvious sense, for the purpose of ascribing to me a sentiment inconsistent with my whole Letter and (I hope I may add) my whole conduct in general, and toward the Clergy in particular, both in public and private.

The mis-statement just complained of, and into which your too warm feelings must have betrayed you, is calculated to excite “ that strife and animosity in the Church,” which you profess to deprecate, but I must rely upon the candour of the Clergy, that they will not ascribe all the plain dealing and simple honesty to your side of the question, and all the “ recondite” meanings and objections to mine “.

▪ It cannot be the wish of the Editor to put upon Mr. Freshfield’s words a meaning which he disclaims. In his own justification, however, he must submit it to the reader whether the characterising any place as “ an exception in the midst of an “ enlightened and respectable neighbourhood” does not imply a deficiency in these properties in the excepted place in comparison with those with which it is contrasted. This, it is confidently presumed, every one would pronounce to be the natural construction of the passage, in whatever situation he should find it : but in the mouth of an advocate of the Bible Society

I am ever ready to accept any thing in the shape of explanation, I shall not therefore reject

there is the same strong additional reason for so construing it, that the genius of any author furnishes for affixing a specific meaning to phraseology employed by him which in itself will admit of a double interpretation: for it is one of the maxims of this institution to arrogate to itself a compleat monopoly of *illumination** at least, if not of respectability, and every fresh specimen of its oratorical effusions furnishes additional proof, that those who become its devotees imperceptibly catch its spirit and adopt its language, and therefore in many instances, when pleading in its behalf without really meaning to cast upon the several objects, which come in review before them, either unmerited obloquy or adulation, they are beguiled into the characterising of these objects as "respectable" or as "exceptions" to respectability, accordingly as they appear in co-operation with it or hostile to the success of its designs. We have only to look to the preceding paragraph of the Letter before us for an exemplification of this, for Mr. F. has there, in a more offensive manner than before, renewed his reflection upon the respectable inhabitants of Hackney, by representing the Vicar and the Vestry as adopting "measures" to defeat the enterprise "of the friends of the Bible Society," to which those friends would "*not descend*," and by surmising against the Vestry and the

* Thus at the Henley Meeting Mr. Cunningham insinuates that "*the honour and the interest* of the University of Oxford" are at stake, unless an Auxiliary Bible Society be formed there, and that its refusal to sanction such an institution would be an act which he could "hardly refrain from considering as a proof that its *sight was impaired or extinguished*." See Account of Proceedings at Henley, Reading Mercury, Oct. 19, 1812.

your declaration, that the serious charge of fanaticism was not intended to rest on me, in reference to the fact stated in my Letter that "I had referred myself to God in prayer," but you maintain that you had a right to refer to "those very monitory passages of our annals" to which you called my attention, to prove that I might be under "delusion" as to the success of my prayers. With every disposition to pass over particular expressions, and to give you credit for an intention consistent with

Editor other very dishonourable insinuations. It is not intended by calling these forth to notice, to charge Mr. F. with repeating an injury almost in the very breath in which he was about to disclaim an intention to the same effect. The Editor in his own behalf, and in the behalf of his respectable fellow-parishioners, completely exonerates Mr. Freshfield from the charge; but Mr. F. must be aware, that under the influence of some bias upon his mind he does suffer expressions to escape him which are as full of injury as they are of meaning, and what this bias is, the exact accordance between his language and that of his fellow associates, when advocating the same cause, incontrovertibly demonstrates. His commendation also of his own Society speaks to the same effect, as his disparagement of those who resist its encroachments: for to state that, where it seeks parochial countenance, its appeals are "to the good sense of the inhabitants," and that "its reliance" for support, is, "on the intrinsic merits of its plan," is so palpably contrary to the fact, that a gentleman of Mr. Freshfield's discernment and integrity could never have affirmed it, had not prejudice in this particular shackled him in the free exercise of his understanding.

Christian charity, I am bound to protest against the whole of your reasoning upon that part of my Letter, because it obviously depends upon a mis-statement of its contents, and a misconception of its meaning. You think proper to consider the whole foundation of my conduct to rest upon a supposed "impression wrought from Heaven upon my mind." But my language must be tortured indeed to warrant any such interpretation, and it might be sufficient for me to repeat my disavowal of the notion imputed to me; however I need not rest here, but refer you again to my Letter in which you will find me stating that the subject had received from me very full consideration; that I should have deemed it criminal if I had not long before considered the matter; that I had not relied upon any vain conceits of my own, but had also prayed for guidance and direction from whom (according to our Church service) "all good counsels and just works do proceed;"—and "having *thus* endeavoured to have my mind rightly informed," I declared myself thoroughly of opinion the plan of the Bible Society was "right and unobjectionable in principle and practice."—Obviously referring for the ground of my conviction to that full, anxious, and serious consideration given to the subject, the importance and nature of which hath rendered it peculiarly proper that I should make it one of my petitions to the Fountain of Light, "in whom are hid all the trea-

“sures of wisdom and knowledge,” and in doing so, I find I have the satisfaction to receive the sanction of your own similar conduct. Your first Letter to which mine was an answer, intreated of me to consider; I therefore answered in a way I thought would be most satisfactory to you, that I had considered, that I had done so in deference to your desire; that I had done so long before; that I had done so most fully; and as a further proof that the consideration you desired had been given, and was not of a light or transient description, I added, that I had pursued the most solemn duty of a Christian in the prosecution of a great and important object^w.

^w The heavy charge of torturing Mr. Freshfield's meaning is brought against the Editor, because, in vindicating himself from a former accusation (vid. p. 49, 50,) of having identified his correspondent with Lord Herbert and the Regicides, in the crimes which they committed, he only cited that part of the introductory paragraph of his correspondent's first Letter, which suggested to his mind the reference to those monitory examples: but it seems he should have separated the passage word from word, and should have made a sentence of each, as Mr. F. has now done, that the points compressed into his apopthegmatic phraseology might each have received its due appreciation.

The Editor would willingly have been spared further reference to a part of the correspondence which does not immediately bear upon the great question at issue between himself and Mr. Freshfield; but being impeached of such outrageous delinquency, he must vindicate himself. He proceeds, therefore, to remark, that Mr. F. has furnished a standard, by which it

Before I quit this point, so purely personal that I regret to have been obliged to notice it, I must

was natural to conclude that he designed the value of his "full consideration" should be estimated. This the reader will find in the very passage upon which his charge is founded; for he there tells the Editor, that he has given his Letter "that consideration to which, as well from his official situation and respectable character as from the great importance of the subject, it was entitled;"—and yet he previously puts it upon record, that he had considered it, adopted his conclusion, and dispatched his reply, all on the same day on which the Letter was received. He afterwards characterises the results of his "full consideration" as "vain conceits:" he further disclaims the placing any "reliance" upon them; and finally, he refers the "guidance and direction" of his conduct "in the affair" to the impressions which he conceives will be wrought by God upon his mind as the return of Prayer.

The Editor persuades himself that there is no distortion here, and therefore trusts that he shall receive a full acquittal of having partially represented the grounds of Mr. F.'s conviction, as he conceives it to be demonstrated that the ground of confidence, which with no small labour of investigation he has endeavoured to appreciate, is the only one whose value is not cancelled by Mr. F. himself.

Upon this solemn subject of Prayer, and upon Mr. F.'s dangerous misconceptions of it, the Editor has already animadverted, in the hope of being instrumental in reclaiming him from the error of his way; and as the resumption of the subject has been forced upon him, he cannot dismiss it without again warning Mr. F. against continuing to turn that means of grace which was given him for his health into an occasion of falling. If he has recourse to it, for the purpose of supplicating the continuance of a sustaining Providence, and for grace to think

be allowed to remind you, that if I have been guilty of fanaticism, you labour under the same imputation ; for it appears by your Letter, you and I have pursued the same course in our desire to be

and act according to the Divine will as revealed *in the written Word*, and makes his prayer in sincerity as well as in truth, he will not ask in vain; still, however, not in the way of sudden and irregular impulse will his petition be granted; but according to the stated and ordinary methods of the Divine dispensations. Any thing beyond this, especially the importuning the Divine Providence to inspire certain private thoughts, or to confirm certain personal convictions, relative to the success of a project merely speculative, and which, if it is not discountenanced, (as to the conviction of the Editor it most decidedly is,) is at least unauthorised by his revealed Word ; not only has no foundation in Scripture, but leads, by a necessary consequence, to enthusiasm and fanaticism, and finally to confusion and to every evil work *. Of all the passages cited in a preceding Letter, in support of the course which Mr. F. has taken to obtain guidance and direction from above, Mat. xxi. 22. is the only one which offers any thing to the purpose ; and this, when taken with its context, *ibid.* 20, 21. will not only justify Mr. Freshfield's pretences, as it does the Apostles' claims, *to private revelations*, but will prove the efficacy of that gentleman's prayers "*to work miracles and to remove mountains.*" This will convince Mr. F. that it was not, as he flatters himself, because his citations were unanswerable that they received no reply, but really because the Editor believed they would deceive no one who was not before in love with the delusion.

* See Memoirs of Col. Hutchinson, third Edition. Vol. 2. p. 158 and 276, for two additional monitory example very much to the purpose. App. of Documents, No. 1.

rightly informed; and unless you consider your own prayers to have been impertinently offered up, you are driven to the other alternative, and must reflect upon them as a satisfaction to your mind, that you had pursued all the means of God's appointment, in order that you might come to a right conclusion upon the matter in question^y.

^y Continual charges of personality have been preferred against the Editor, and as this is the last of them, he now, once for all, protests against the imputation, and solemnly declares that no sentence or expression has designedly issued from his pen which did not appear to him material to the great object before him—the averting from his own parish the blow which was aimed at its peace, and the exposing the sophistry and the artifices of that Society which has become the prolific parent of such formidable mischief, and the displaying an impressive exhibition of its practical effects. Had he reproached Mr. Freshfield with such culpable ignorance, or such corrupt handling of the Science of the Law, as would have been conveyed in charging him with “opposing the immateriality of its forms to the substance, of it, and adopting the form in lieu of the substance,” and had he selected the season of affliction to cast this reproach upon him, he should have deemed no reprehension too severe which he had received; and as Mr. Freshfield, while continually complaining of personality, has * so far forgot himself as to send specifically, as a *season-*

* “Mr. F. is extremely sorry to find Mr. Norris's mind has been so painfully exercised of late with domestic affliction, and he trusts he will not be considered impertinent, if he suggests at such a season, how much these trials are calculated to shew the immateriality of forms, as *opposed to, or adopted in lieu of, the substance of Christianity*. In the hour of death, will it not be a subject of regret, if

It will not be necessary for me to offer distinct considerations to all the different members of the proposition you next select from my Letter ; they all depend upon the certainty for which you contend, that the Parochial Clergy of Hackney are right in their view of the inexpediency of forming the proposed Auxiliary Bible Society, and of the mischiefs they apprehend from its establishment ; to which I shortly answer, that the “imaginations” I hold upon the subject are supported by several Bishops and very many conscientious Clergymen of the Established Church, who certainly do lament that any individual can bring his mind to oppose the most probable means of spreading the Gospel ; relying for their warrant to do so upon certain evils and dangers which have no existence

able intimation to the Editor under the trial which the successive deaths of two relations brought with it, a parallel impeachment of his “Christianity” with that exemplified above, he will surely now perceive that he does not know what spirit he is of, and that his attachment to the Bible Society betrays him into acts of inhumanity which his generous mind would immediately revolt at, were the operation of its baneful influence but for one moment suspended.

“ much valuable time shall have been expended in pursuing the circumstantial of Christianity, *instead* of its grand fundamental principles.”—Extract of note from Mr. Freshfield to Mr. Norris, dated Dec. 3, 1812.

except in "imagination"; but we are still willing to give full credit to the purity of the motive by which such opponents were actuated.

* In the developement which has been made in the preceding pages, the Editor confidently promises himself, that a complete antidote to the requiems of the Bible Society and its advocates is provided, and that the soothing sounds of "danger" having no existence but in imagination" will lull the reader into fatal security no more. That it is time for him to shake off his slumbers, this self-recommended and professedly unassuming Institution shall now testify against itself. Its own eighth Report will announce to him, that it contemplates something *beyond* "the circulation of the *pure unmixed Scriptures*," and is fully aware, and not a little ostentatious in the display of its *political power*; for in p. 78 of the aforesaid Report, adopting a portion of the annual commendatory declamation of one of its Auxiliary dependencies, it makes its boast of "having formed, in the midst of our enemies, and holding by the strongest ties of attachment, select bands of friends, whose union and co-operation have a strong tendency to counteract the efforts of those who seek our destruction—of being thus instrumental in turning the tide of public opinion in our favour; and, as every form of human government must, in a greater or less degree, respect public opinion, on which ultimately it depends for its support, of gradually extending its influence to the very seats of those Governments which are now in a state of actual or impending war," and thus of hastening, according to its own visions, the happy time of universal peace, but far more probably the preliminary period of universal apostacy and universal confusion. This is its own statement of a benefit strictly *political*, which we are told that a review of that portion of its *foreign* correspondence,

All your reasoning upon the supposed invasion by the laity of your particular province depends principally upon the original question, whether the measure of the Bible Society be right in itself, because if it is, then your argument is disposed of. The Parochial Clergy were solicited to take the lead; they declined doing so, and therefore other Clergymen, in conjunction with the laity, are doing what you have refused. The laity thus *co-operate*, (which you admit to be right,) and by no

which is already before the world, demonstrates it to be conferring on this country. But its operations are not confined to *foreign* parts. It is a *British* as well as a *Foreign* Society; were not this the case, we might leave to *Foreign Governments* to avail themselves as they pleased of this development of a most insidious and formidable conspiracy against them, and to take such measures for its discomfiture as they should see fit. But we must be besotted indeed to read this detail of the dexterous glidings of this new Pontificate from the affections of the people to the usurpation of the throne, and not to be reminded that the Society has acquired also *domestic* influence; and that if in *foreign* countries (where its numbers are but few, and where little depends upon public opinion,) it can *counteract* in any degree the measures of their respective *Governments*, much more is all this to be apprehended from its overpowering numbers and combined efforts in *this* country, where public opinion will always make itself heard, and eventually prevail.—The evils and the dangers then to be apprehended from the Bible Society are not imaginary; they have substantial existence; they are at once formidable and imminent; and “*Ne quid detrimenti capiat ‘Respublica’*” is a memento well deserving the prompt attention of those whom it may concern. See App. xv, note b.*

means *supersede* the operation of the labours of the Clergy; and this enables me to pass over a considerable part of your letter^b.

^b In this passage it is simply stated, that "the Parochial Clergy were solicited to take the lead." But in the Official Report of the Proceedings at the General Meeting, (for which Mr. Freshfield, as the founder and chief agent of the confederacy, is also responsible, and which has been laid before the world) it is further declared that "the intention" (i. e. of forming the Auxiliary Society) "when it *first* suggested itself, was *immediately* communicated to the "principal Parochial Clergy." The Editor is obliged to state that this is a most unfaithful representation; for he had *private* notice given him that the project was afloat on September 23d, and on the following day communicated his intelligence, by letter, to the Vicar; and this intelligence, though he could not, at that time, trace it to its source, came, he now knows, from Mr. Freshfield; the Editor's informant having received it from a gentleman to whom Mr. F. had applied for his concurrence. For upwards of three weeks after this the Editor heard no more of the report, and really had persuaded himself that it was a groundless rumour; but then the Vicar acquainted him in his turn, that he had just received a letter from Mr. Freshfield, apprizing him of the design, and inviting him to give it his sanction and support. This was on October 16th, and a similar communication to Dr. Gaskin (whose Church Mr. F. is in the constant habit of attending) bears the same date. So far then from being *immediately* apprized, it was not till the plan was matured, and, the Editor verily believes, the Provisional Committee chiefly formed, that the Clergy were advertised of it*; and

* The same course precisely has been pursued at Bocking, in Essex, and at the adjacent parishes, excepting in the few instances where the

The charge against you of disrespect towards those concerned in the Cambridge proceedings,

his belief is founded upon this fact, that he knows two of the most respectable Churchmen in Hackney, to whom Mr. F. *previously applied to meet some of their neighbours* for setting on foot the Association. The first of them assented, but recalled his assent the moment the matter was explained; and the other enquired whether he had communicated with the Vicar, and upon being told that he was about to do so, recommended that step to him as his first proceeding, and the Letter was received the same day. It is far from the intention of the Editor even to surmise any thing against the integrity of his Correspondent by this recital. On the contrary, he is satisfied that he is an honourable and conscientious man; but having persuaded himself (as together with every speaker at the Hackney Meeting he declares) that the cause in which he is engaged is the cause of God, those who oppose it (as characterized by the Provisional Committee, see App. No. xv.) appear the enemies of God; and it seems no more than Christian prudence to circumvent them. Thus much for the illustration of the fundamental position of the passage. The superstructure is to this effect, that because the Parochial Clergy are faithful to their ordination vows, therefore a confederacy of intrusive Brethren

Clergy are Members of the Bible Society. At the former place, a domiciliary visitation was made by Dissenters without Dr. Wordsworth's privity; and, after an interval of three weeks, when all things were ready for a public meeting, he was insulted by an invitation, delivered by a Clergyman, to take the lead in forming a Branch Association. In the course of two years, he had himself distributed in the Parish 180 Bibles, 140 Testaments, 196 Prayer-books, 400 bound religious books, and religious Tracts out of number; but this would not preserve his Pastoral Charge from invasion and auxiliary enrolment.

remains in its full force. You say you delivered no opinion, but merely stated a fact; and upon referring to your Letter, I find you distinctly state, that though all the titles of the members of the University who attended the Town Hall are displayed, yet (you add) "I can assure you there is not one of them whose opinions upon theological points are held there in much consideration." You have therefore your choice; either it is your opinion the highly respectable characters referred to are persons whose opinions upon theological points are not entitled to consideration; or you assert the fact, upon your own authority, that at Cambridge the opinions of those persons are not held in much consideration; either alternative would, I think, fix upon you the charge you formerly preferred against me, of having "vilified venerable men," if not a "venerable institution."

and Sectarian Teachers are to combine with Laymen of their several persuasions to usurp the authority of the aforesaid Clergymen, and to supersede them in their office.

* The only reply the Editor can make to this reiterated charge, is to refer to his statement of the fact upon which his assertion is grounded, (p. 13.) and to make this further remark upon it, that the time and circumstances of the grant were of so marked a character as plainly to demonstrate, that in the points of theological controversy, upon which the Bible Society has for the last eight years been disturbing the peace

In answer to your question, why I bring "the Bishop of Llandaff from Westmoreland, and the Bishop of Bristol from his lodge in Trinity College," to partake of your censure? I beg to refer you again to the account of the Cambridge proceedings, according to which you will see that both prelates became vice-presidents of that obnoxious Society^d.

I have met with no circumstance that should lead me to consider the "quality of the work" performed by the two Societies to which you refer, different in excellency; I must therefore continue to think the surplus "quantity" a very important consideration.

of the Church, the opinions of its advocates were not, in the University, held in much consideration.

^d Mr. F. must know that this reference must be to his own confusion; for the Editor's observation is expressly limited to those Members of the University who gave their "attendance in the Town Hall;" and Mr. F. knows, that the paper referred to, though it records that the Prelates in question had lent their names to the Society, bears no testimony to their attendance at the Constituent Meeting; indeed, its very silence with respect to them among the compliments of the day proves that they were not there. The Editor's vindication of himself, therefore, remains in full force, and Mr. F. is responsible for having so indecorously, and without any warrant whatever, dragged two of our Church Governors into the correspondence.

The discussion to which you allude respecting the supply of the Welch, in 1809, with Bibles, I never entered into; but I think that even here you labour under some mistake, because I recollect, an application being made to me and others, so long ago as the year 1803, by a Clergyman from Wales, representing the great want of the Scriptures within the principality; and I then consulted with a gentleman now high in his Majesty's service, as to the means of supplying those wants; and out of the difficulty which then presented itself, I believe the plan of the British and Foreign Bible Society arose; and I can certainly vouch for the fact, that at that time no sectarian object was entertained, but those persons who were applied to would most gladly have witnessed the supply afforded by any society or any means; and this occurred six years prior to the period to which you refer; if therefore the want continued until 1809, it is a lamentable fact, and loudly called upon all Christians for exertion*.

* The Bishop of London's statement of the Welch Bible concern is as follows:—"The very first act, or one of them, of the British and Foreign Bible Society was to undertake a Welch Bible, at a time when the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, in conjunction with the University of Oxford, were preparing as large an edition as could be wanted, under the patronage of the Welch Bishops; and to put it into the hands of a *most noted leader of the*

The Bible Society has for its end and object
 “ the circulation of the Word of God for the sal-
 “ vation of mankind;”—it introduces no novel
 inventions, but pursues the track long tried, and

“ *Dissenters in that country* *. And when put to shame on
 “ this head, they still persisted in forwarding their edition,
 “ (an act, as it seems to me, of undue rivalry,) by means
 “ which the University of Oxford could not take, in order
 “ to give *an advantage to the Dissenters*; for it is a fact,
 “ though it may seem improbable to you, that *the very dis-
 “ tribution of the Bible was made an instrument of influence
 “ to the Sectaries*, who, in my opinion, have, in that country,
 “ done more injury to society and sound Religion, than any
 “ thing that has happened for centuries before. *I say these
 “ things from personal experience and knowledge.*” Letter to
 the Clergy of Colchester. Vid. Papers occasioned by Attempts
 to form Auxiliary Bible Societies, &c. Rivingtons, 1812.
 See also Dr. Wordsworth’s Letters to Lord Teignmouth,
 p. 45—54, and p. 156.

* From Mr. Dealtry’s Vindication, &c. p. 8, 11. it appears that the
 person here adverted to is Mr. Charles, of Bala, upon whom the Bible
 Society have bestowed an “ Honorary governorship for life,” the high-
 est of the two dignities which they have created to reward the two de-
 grees of merit to be earned, by rendering them either “ essential” or
 “ *very essential services*,” (See 8th Rep. of the B. and F. Bible So-
 ciety, p. xiv.) Of the nature of these services, the passage above cited
 affords a specimen, and of the value set by Mr. Charles upon Bible
 Society approbation, this criterion is furnished by himself, that even
 the cordial thanks of an Auxiliary Meeting called forth from him the
 public acknowledgment, which the Editor almost shudders to record,
 that he “ *esteemed them next to the approbation of the Redeemer.*” See
 account of the Merionethshire Auxiliary Bible Society Meeting. Sa-
 lopian Journal of January 27th, 1813.

which may be denominated the good old way'; but if good men will persevere in violent opposition to measures so obviously right, the Society may surely oppose to them what other good men have said in its support, and the reasons which have induced them to promote its success, which is perfectly consistent with the pledge "only to distribute Bibles."

You need no apology to me for the course you have pursued, nor do you incur the risk of being considered my "enemy"—nay further, I shall not attempt to detract from the boldness and courage you consider yourself to have displayed. Perhaps it might have been as well had you selected for the object of your attack one of the Clergymen who promote the formation of the intended Society, or an individual who had as much leisure as your-

' "The good old way," will naturally remind the reader of "the good old cause," with which it is intimately connected, as being the course scientifically adjusted for carrying on that "cause," from its commencement to its consummation. Of this "good old cause," and of the grim features which mark its character, all trace upon our memories appears rapidly wearing out; though during Cromwell's Usurpation, when it was last triumphant, our forefathers heard and felt enough of it, one would think, to have absolutely engrained the horrors which it visited upon them, in the very frame of their posterity, and to have made them unradicably constitutional.

self: however, as I neither write for fame, nor as the champion of the British and Foreign Bible Society, I trust I shall have sufficiently protected my own character from misconstruction, and shall not prejudice the merits of the Society, by the hasty compositions which numerous pressing engagements compel me to return to your addresses.

In taking (I hope as far as this subject is concerned) a final leave of you, allow me in return for the large portion of advice you have given me, to offer this one sentence for your adoption, it will relieve your mind from much uneasiness, and ren-

* At the close of this correspondence, it will not be necessary for the Editor to use many words to repel the charge which is here insinuated that he was the aggressor. He was quietly occupied in the discharge of his parochial duties, and really had nothing farther from his thoughts than contending with any one upon the greatly sophisticated question of the merits of the Bible Society, when Mr. Freshfield conceived, and began to execute the presumptuous project of "*clearing*" *the parishes of Stoke Newington and Hackney* "*of their Spiritual Heads,*" and "*of saving the souls of the inhabitants from eternal perdition,*" by a new method and a new ministry of his own. Whatever the Editor has done therefore, fidelity to the sacred trusts confided to him has exacted; he has had no more opportunity of "*selecting his object of attack,*" than the steward of any household has when his master's property is invaded, or than the shepherd has when he sees the wolf coming to make havoc of his flock.

der the path of duty plain and simple. " If this
 " counsel or this work be of men, it will come to
 " nought. But if it be of God, ye cannot over-
 " throw it; lest haply ye be found even to fight
 " against God^b."

I have the honour to be, Sir,
 Your most obedient Servant,
 J. W. FRESHFIELD.

^b The most grateful acknowledgments are due to Mr. Freshfield for " offering" to the Editor's " adoption" his valedictory citation, (from Acts v. 38, 39.) and as the best return he can make, he begs to direct his correspondent's attention to v. 34. of the same chapter, which will temper his zeal with a little useful knowledge, by instructing him that what he " offers" as *authority*, is but *the opinion of a Pharisee of the Pharisees*. The Editor begs further to enhance the value of his requital by another reference, very much in point with the phænomena of present times, (2 Kings xviii. 22.) by which he will perceive that the mere putter down of *the worship of imaginations*, is sometimes liable to be proscribed as *the sacrilegious destroyer " of the High Places, and the " Altars of God."*

As this sentence of *Gamaliel's* is not appropriated to its present use exclusively by Mr. Freshfield, but is submitted with all the confidence and solemnity of a *Divine* prohibition by Mr. Dealtry to Dr. Wordsworth, and by the Dean of Carlisle to Professor Marsh; it seemed necessary to point out the real author to the Reader, and to put him in possession of a Scriptural Caveat against the intimidation which this use of it is designed to convey to the truly religious, for the purpose of awing them into neutrality at least with respect to the

Bible Society's proceedings; and to this end it is expedient *further* to apprise him, that it has often been employed in the same service, as Nalson observes upon, that "it is one of those Texts of which the Puritans were wont to make constant use to encourage their party, and to discourage weak and timorous minds from meddling with them," and he enters at considerable length into very judicious observations upon it, to shew how grossly it was perverted by this misapplication. See Countermince, or Religion pretended but Rebellion intended, p. 170. See also another instance in point, App. XIV. Note ^d.

APPENDIX.

I.

In consequence of the Vicar's permission, as expressed in the subsequent Correspondence, the following Letter is respectfully submitted to the consideration of the Parish.

HACKNEY, 30th Oct. 1812.

MY DEAR SIR,

I HAVE read with particular satisfaction the Letter which you have done me the favour to address me, stating your reasons for disapproving the formation of an Auxiliary Bible Society at Hackney, and have thought it my duty to communicate it to as many of my neighbours as have fallen in my way, and it is our opinion that you should suffer it to be printed for general dispersion through the Parish; as it appears to us

that your sentiments upon this subject should not be either unknown or misapprehended among your Parishioners.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours most truly,

THOMAS WARBURTON.

Hackney, 28th Oct. 1812.

MY DEAR SIR,

I HAVE to beg your excuse for not returning an immediate answer to your obliging communication; but I confess to you I have had considerable difficulty in making up my mind upon the subject of your Letter, for I have at all times an extreme unwillingness to obtrude any observations of mine in print. Yet as I trust that in my private remarks to you I cannot have expressed myself in a manner so contrary to my intention as to have said any thing which can give pain or provoke controversy, if you and the respectable Friends with whom you have conferred are of opinion that a more general circulation of my Let-

ter may have any tendency to promote the great object which I have at heart—the peace and quiet of my Parish—I cannot refuse to leave to your adoption the only way perhaps in which that circulation can be effected.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours ever, with esteem,

JOHN JAMES WATSON.

Hackney, Thursday, Oct. 29th. 1812.

MY DEAR SIR,

MY best thanks are due to you for your considerate reference to me in a matter so intimately connected with the spiritual concerns of my parish, as the projected formation of an Auxiliary Bible Society in Hackney. And I am still more obliged by your kind and ready acquiescence in the opinion which I expressed to you through our friend Mr. NORRIS. With such a simple expression of my sentiments on this occasion I would

gladly have contented myself. But, though in the correspondence of the respectable individual who has invited both your support and mine, it is particularly grateful to me to have been allowed that entire credit for the conscientious purity of my motives to which I feel myself justly entitled, yet, since on adverting to the public discussions upon this highly important subject which have taken place in other parts of the country, we cannot but lament that it has been one of the unhappy features of this new Society to allow none to dissent from its proceedings without subjecting themselves to imputations, which every Member, and more especially every Minister of our Church must be most anxious to disclaim, it is a duty which I owe to you, and to myself, and still more to that Church to which we have the happiness of belonging, to put you in possession of such a brief explanation as may preclude any mis-apprehension of the motives which determine my conduct.

And in doing this I would most solicitously abstain from the repetition of a single argument which can unnecessarily excite any unpleasant feeling in the minds of those who conscientiously differ from me in their religious opinions, and who can see nothing objectionable in the constitution of the Bible Society. For from many of them I have received too repeated and strong proofs of personal

regard, not to feel real regret, when a sense of duty forbids me to act in concert with them, and more particularly when it seems to call for an enlargement on the reasons which restrain me from co-operation.

The general arguments upon this interesting subject have been long before the public, and I think they will seldom fail to satisfy such Members of the Establishment (to whom alone indeed any observations of mine must be considered applicable) as have leisure dispassionately to weigh them. For my own part it would be disingenuous not to avow that they have left no doubt upon my mind as to the unfitness of our using the instrumentality of the Bible Society in the pursuit of an object, however great and glorious, while an equal facility of attaining it is offered to us by another venerable Society, which has for more than a century been successfully engaged in widely diffusing the blessings of Christian Knowledge in different quarters of the world, and which to Churchmen must be free from every objection.

Upon these general arguments, however, as I before intimated, I shall forbear to insist, and confine myself simply to two motives—of a personal and of a local nature—which have had a consi-

derable share in influencing my conduct in the present instance.

In the first place, then, I have for my government the decided opinion of my Diocesan, in answer to an application distinctly made to him by some of his Clergy for his Lordship's advice and direction upon this very point—And a dutiful regard for his declared and deliberate judgment must at all times controul my conduct in matters in which I can conscientiously act upon it.

And in the next place, as I am happy to know, that in my view of the subject I have the concurrence of the resident Clergy, and of several highly respectable Laymen in my Parish, I cannot but anxiously deprecate the introduction of a question among us, which, from the manner in which it has hitherto been too generally agitated in other Districts, threatens to aggravate the unavoidable evils of conscientious dissent, and to divide those who are at present walking together in the unity of the Spirit, and in the bond of peace.

I cannot but hope, therefore, that even those who are most earnest in the prosecution of this plan, may yet be induced to forego their design, when they perceive that it can only be pursued at

the hazard of interrupting that general harmony, which, I bless God, has so happily subsisted in our mutual relations and intercourse since the commencement of my connection with the Parish.

And more especially would I indulge this hope, when it is recollected, that whether these individuals be Members of our Church, or upon the purest principles may have separated from her Communion, the important object which they have so much at heart, is, from our nearness to the Metropolis, and continual communication with it, accomplishable by means not liable to the same exceptions. In the case of the latter, by a direct contribution to the Parent Institution in London—and in the case of Churchmen, through the agency of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, above referred to, which I cannot indeed too strongly recommend to their support, from my personal acquaintance with the extensive benefits which it is at this time rendering to the cause of true Religion, by the gratuitous supply, both at home and abroad, of Bibles, and also of Prayer-Books, and of the most pious and judicious Tracts on all the leading points of Christian Faith and Practice.

Under these circumstances then, and upon these grounds, I trust that my Parishioners will feel with

me that it is not expedient to form an Auxiliary Bible Society in Hackney.

I am, with much esteem,

Dear Sir, yours very truly,

JOHN JAMES WATSON.

Hackney, Tuesday Evening, 27th Oct, 1812.

TO THOS. WARBURTON, Esq.

II.

PARISH OF ST. JOHN AT HACKNEY.

At a Vestry, held the 2d of November, 1812, in the Vestry-Room of this Parish, the following Resolutions were unanimously agreed to.

The Letter addressed by the Vicar to Mr. Warburton, dated the 27th October 1812, and circulated among his Parishioners, in which he assigns his Reasons for disapproving the Formation of AN AUXILIARY BIBLE SOCIETY in the Parish, being read, it was

RESOLVED, That this Vestry entirely coincide in opinion with the Vicar, and will use its best endeavours to discourage such a Society being

formed, the inexpediency of which is so clearly set forth in the Letter alluded to, as well as its tendency to create disunion in the Parish.

RESOLVED, That the thanks of this Vestry be presented to the Rev. Dr. Watson, for his zeal manifested on all occasions in promoting the peace and harmony of this Parish, and for his attention to the spiritual and temporal comforts of his parishioners.

RESOLVED, That Dr. Watson's Letter of the above date be entered upon the minutes of this day's proceedings.

RESOLVED, That a copy of the above Resolutions be presented to the Rev. Dr. Watson, signed by the Chairman.

RESOLVED, That the above Resolutions be printed, and circulated through the Parish.

By Order of the Vestry,

W. LANGMORE and SON,
VESTRY CLERKS.

III.

The Reply of the Rev. Dr. Watson to the Vote of Thanks contained in the foregoing Resolutions.

DEAR NORRIS,

I AM much obliged by your conveyance of the Resolutions of the Vestry, and request you will communicate to them at their next meeting (if I should be prevented from assuring them in person) how sensible I am of this testimony of approbation to my pastoral labours. In the mean time I trust I may be excused for submitting a wish for the suspension of their last resolution, at least until further proceedings on the part of the friends of the Bible Society shall evince their determination to persevere. In this event, indeed, it would be perhaps no longer proper in me to interpose an objection against the circulation among my parishioners of so gratifying (and I would hope so useful) a confirmation of my sentiments on that important subject. But I cannot quit so interesting a topic as the provision for the spiritual wants of any part of my flock, without repeating a wish which I have ever felt and expressed, that the word of God should be in the hands of every family in my parish,

properly disposed to search the Scriptures. And although from the knowledge on the part of my poorer parishioners that the Sacred Volume has at all times been freely given by me upon every suitable application, and from my own knowledge that besides the regular supplies from the parochial schools, many of the clergy and laity of the parish have long been in the habit of co-operating with me in similar donations, I am willing to believe there cannot be room for a very wide distribution here; yet when I see Christian zeal running so high in the cause, should it be found upon a sober enquiry that the desire to possess and the disposition to use the Holy Scriptures are augmented in a degree commensurate with the readiness to disperse them, I should feel myself wanting in duty to my flock if I did not seek to turn that zeal into the best channel. Should therefore the perseverance of the advocates of this Auxiliary Bible Society oblige me to abandon the hope which I had cherished of preserving the parish from an attempt, which I must still think likely to interrupt its peace, I would, from the same motives which dictated my letter to Mr. Warburton, wave any proposition which may have the appearance of rivalry between the two Societies therein referred to; and submit it to the further consideration of the Vestry, whether this great object, as far as it more immediately respects us as a parish, may not be fully and unobjection-

ably attained by a parochial contribution confined to parochial purposes.

Hackney,
Nov. 3, 1812.

I am,

Dear Norris,

Yours ever affectionately,

J. J. WATSON.

Rev. H. H. Norris.



IV.

PARISH OF ST. JOHN AT HACKNEY.

At a Vestry, held the 26th of November, 1812, in the Vestry-Room of this Parish, by Special Summons, for the Purpose of taking into Consideration the Vicar's Letter of the 3d of November, in Answer to the Communication of the Proceedings of the last Vestry, the following Resolutions were unanimously agreed to.

RESOLVED, That, in the apprehension of this Meeting, an indiscriminating distribution of the Bible has a tendency to lessen the reverence due to that Sacred Volume.

RESOLVED, That this Meeting do at the same time most heartily concur in the wish expressed by the Vicar, that a copy of the Holy Scriptures, together with the Liturgy of the Church of England, were in the possession of every family in the parish desirous of obtaining them, and who upon due inquiry shall be found likely to make a right use of such a gift.

RESOLVED, That notwithstanding this Meeting is convinced that individual donations of Bibles and Prayer-books, especially on the part of the Vicar and Clergy of this parish, have long been freely made, where there appeared a reasonable prospect of their being usefully applied, yet, from a consideration of its great extent and increasing population, they are anxious publicly to express their readiness to co-operate with their Vicar for the fullest attainment of his wishes in the furtherance of so desirable an object.

RESOLVED, That the above Resolutions be printed and circulated through the parish.

By Order of the Vestry,

W. LANGMORE and SON,

Vestry Clerks.

V.

PARISH OF ST. JOHN AT HACKNEY.

At a Vestry held the 7th of December, 1812, a Letter directed to the Chairman, and laid before the Vestry, was taken into Consideration, of which the following is a Copy.

“ SIR,

“ Though not a Vestryman myself,
 “ I have seen in the hands of one of the Vestry
 “ the Vicar’s Letter of the third instant ; and hear-
 “ tily concurring as a parishioner in his suggestion
 “ for the relief of the spiritual wants of his parish,
 “ and as a Churchman in the sentiments which he
 “ has expressed in his former Letter on the subject
 “ of the British and Foreign Bible Society, I beg to
 “ tender in furtherance of his parochial plan

“ 100 Bibles and Testaments,

“ 100 Prayer Books.

“ For though I am persuaded that much mis-
 “ representation obtains in all the statements I
 “ have yet seen, as to the real extent of the de-
 “ ficiency, to the correction of which Clergy and
 “ Laity, Churchmen and Dissenters throughout
 “ the kingdom have for many years, in their several
 “ proportions and-in their separate communions,
 “ been largely contributing, wherever a reasonable

“ hope of useful application appeared; yet, per-
 “ haps, the supply of such a population as Hack-
 “ ney, ought scarcely to be left to individual bounty,
 “ however liberally it may hitherto have been
 “ exerted.

“ I have therefore only to add, that upon the
 “ acceptance of my offer being testified by my ad-
 “ mission into your subscription list, under the
 “ designation subjoined *, the books will be imme-
 “ diately forwarded to the Vicarage house by

“ Sir,

“ Your obedient Servant,

“ *A Member of the Society for promoting*
 “ *Christian Knowledge.*”

RESOLVED, That the thanks of the Vestry be
 and they are hereby presented to the liberal and
 unknown writer for his generous offer.

RESOLVED, That the Vicar be requested to
 receive the same, as well as any other contribution

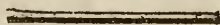
* “ A Member of the Society for promoting Christian
 “ Knowledge, and a friend to the Vicar, and to the widest
 “ distribution of the Scriptures in the manner suggested by
 “ him.”

that may be offered, and to superintend the distribution thereof.

RESOLVED, That the above Resolutions be printed and circulated in the parish.

By Order of the Vestry,

W. LANGMORE, Vestry Clerk:



VI.

An Address, on the proposed Formation of an Auxiliary Bible Society for the District of Hackney and its Vicinity.

IT was the last injunction of our blessed Saviour to his disciples, that they should “go and preach the Gospel to every creature^a.” The

^a The sincerity of that reverence for Holy Scripture which the advocates of the Bible Society, with so much solemnity affect to entertain, may be estimated by their *respectful* method of handling it, in the very first sentence of this address: for a reference to Mark xvi. 14, 15, (from whence the citation comes) will shew that the charge to “preach the Gospel to every creature,” was not delivered to “*the Disciples*,” as is here most shamelessly mis-stated, but to the *eleven Apostles*. The motive of this corruption of the Sacred Text is too obvious to need specification.

Gospel reveals a system of mercy, worthy of its Divine Author, and deserving of all acceptance; it contains that which can mitigate the severities of war, smooth the bed of sickness, comfort the distresses of the poor; that which brings present peace, and leads to endless happiness. When the Christian Philanthropist considers this interesting subject, he is ready to exclaim, O! that it were possible to put this heavenly and inestimable gift into the hands of those millions of immortal creatures, who, as yet know nothing of the true God, or of his salvation! Is there no way, he eagerly inquires, of uniting and combining the whole Christian world in one firm body^b; which, animated

^b For this *difficulty* the "Christian world" are indebted to the Bible Society no less than for its solution. They were both excogitated together; the one to be the Chaperone to the other. That the difficulty did not exist, a reference to 1 Cor. xii. 13, x. 17, i. 10, and Acts ii. 41, 42. will demonstrate, for in the three former passages the Christian means of cementing and cherishing union are pointed out, and in the last their efficacy is exemplified: In the third collect, moreover, for Good Friday, the tender concern of the Church upon this subject is displayed, and the real obstacles which delay its consummation are specified. To remove these obstacles by giving them sanction and consolidation—to heal the breaches of Christian unity, "*by making schism catholic,*" as Mr. Nolan pithily expresses it, and "*by reducing the Church to the outward seeming of a schism from the sectaries,*" is a pharmaceutick discovery worthily co-eval

with love, and burning with zeal for the best interests of their poor benighted brethren, might be enabled, through an union of effort, to scatter among them the "Bread which came down from Heaven?" Thanks be to Him "from whom alone all good counsels, and all just works do proceed," the wish of the philanthropist *is* gratified; there *is* a way now made known by which *all* good men may join hand and heart in the best of works; a door is now thrown open, through which the rays of light and life are streaming forth on those who have hitherto "sat in darkness, and in the shadow of death."

Notwithstanding the general interest excited by the British and Foreign Bible Society, many are not accurately acquainted with its *constitution*, its *professed object*, and its *direct and ultimate tendency*.

with Dr. Gardiner's Universal Medicine, both of them the characteristic and collateral phenomena of the celebrated "third Æra of Light:" When however Rom. xvi. 17, Tit. iii. 10, 2 Thess. iii. 6, 14, and 2 John 9, 10. have been considered, it will perhaps be thought that in ascribing the "Counsel" and the "Work" to God, He is made the author of that which He most peremptorily prohibits, and that these illuminators of the world would do well first to correct their own "ignorance or contempt of God's word," before they proceed farther in its dissemination.

Its *constitution* is simple, comprehensive, and firmly cemented. Among the Members who compose it, are the good and the great of every denomination: His Majesty's Ministers, Lords Spiritual and Temporal, Dignitaries and Clergymen of the Established Church, Dissenting Ministers and Laymen in general. All who acknowledge the Bible to be the Word of God, and sufficient to make men wise to salvation, are invited to enlist under its truly Christian and Catholic banners. Thus it has received the sanction of ROYALTY, the support of PRELACY, the patronage of NOBILITY^c; whilst it is strengthened and encouraged by a vast and daily increasing number of the truest friends to their King and Country, to the Church and State.

Its *professed object* is the most noble that ever entered the mind of man; to circulate the Holy Scriptures *without Note or Comment*, over the whole earth, beginning at our own native country.

Its *direct and ultimate tendency* is sufficient to gladden the heart of every disciple of our Lord, and of every well wisher to the human race. By

^c See p. 90, Note n, and then decide upon the modesty and the veracity of those who penned this passage.

glancing at what has been done, we may form some estimate of what may ultimately be looked for. In the short space of eight years, during which period the Society has existed, nearly half a million (431,939) Bibles and Testaments have been issued from the Society, exclusive of those circulated at its charge in various parts abroad. More than one hundred thousand pounds have been expended, twenty similar Societies have been formed in America, others in Europe and Asia, through *its* assistance, and in consequence of *its* example!!!

In addition to these facts, translations and editions of the Holy Scriptures have been promoted or circulated in more than fifty foreign languages, in many of which, copies either never existed, or could not be procured from their extreme scarceness, to supply the pressing demands of the poor. The translations into *all* the principal Eastern dialects, spoken in those countries, where the sanguinary rites of Pagan superstition are still acted, will, by the Divine blessing, in a few years be completed. These translations require annually considerable sums of money for their support; and that necessary aid is liberally afforded by the British and Foreign Bible Society.

We read in the sublime prophecy of Daniel that, The stone which was cut out without hands, “ be-

“ came a great mountain and filled the *whole earth* :” and in Isaiah that, “ In the last days the mountain “ of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top “ of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the “ hills, and *all nations* shall flow unto it.” Whatever may be the period assigned for the accomplishment of these wonderful predictions, it must be granted that there cannot be a more auspicious prelude to such accomplishment, than the universal diffusion of the Scriptures. What can be so well calculated to pave the way for the extension of the Redeemer’s kingdom? Is it not enough to lead the inhabitants of the world to conclude that “ the De- “ sire of all nations” is about to come? Is it not enough to make them “ all amazed, and marvel, “ and say one to another, How read we every man “ in our own tongue wherein we were born? We “ do read in our own tongues the wonderful works “ of God!”

The mere statement of facts—100,000l. EXPENDED ON THE SCRIPTURES—HALF A MILLION OF COPIES CIRCULATED—NUMEROUS TRANSLATIONS AND EDITIONS—FRIENDLY AND AUXILIARY SOCIETIES ESTABLISHED, AND ESTABLISHING, IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE WORLD—IN EIGHT YEARS—will surely prove that the British and Foreign Bible Society is, in its direct and ultimate tendency,

pregnant with the richest blessings to the whole family of man.

Having traced the outline of the *Parent*, we will now shortly advert to her *Children*. The *Auxiliary Societies* then have a twofold operation; to give strength and permanency to the Parent Institution, and to investigate and supply the local wants of the poor. The vast expences and extended system of the General Institution require adequate means of support; and it would be impossible for those who are engaged in the general management to examine with minuteness the wants of the various districts of this, or of other countries. Here then the Auxiliaries are all-important; to the Parent Institution, they are the sinews which give strength; to their respective districts, they are the channels which convey to every part their due proportion of the living stream.

The wants of the poor of this country are much greater than have been imagined. By means of a very careful and impartial inquiry in the *City of London*, it was found that *above one half* were destitute of the Word of Life. “ Out of 1535 families “ which have been already visited, only 701 are “ possessed of either a Bible or a Testament, several of these are old and in a bad condition, and

“ others from the smallness of the print, are scarcely
 “ legible. An earnest desire prevails among the poor,
 “ with few exceptions, to enjoy the privilege of read-
 “ ing the Scriptures; and a sincere disposition has
 “ been manifested to partake of the knowledge
 “ which they impart. Many, notwithstanding the
 “ extreme poverty under which they labour, have
 “ declared a willingness to contribute their humble
 “ pittance towards procuring a Bible for themselves
 “ and their families. Surely it will suffice to state
 “ this fact: the more opulent inhabitants will gladly
 “ relieve such necessities, and encourage such dis-
 “ positions among the industrious poor.”

The following is the result of a similar enquiry in
 the borough of *Southwark* and its vicinity. “ In
 “ 925 families comprising 4503 individuals, 2745
 “ can read, and only 395 have Bibles or Testa-
 “ ments. Of the 530 families who are thus desti-
 “ tute of the Holy Scriptures, more than 400 ex-
 “ pressed a *strong* desire to possess them, many of
 “ whom professed a willingness to pay for them, as
 “ far as their very limited means would admit;
 “ 14 of those families have never seen a Bible! and
 “ about 60 are Roman Catholics, a large propor-
 “ tion of whom appear extremely desirous of copies.”
 Of a similar inquiry instituted in Westminster, the
 following is the result: in 4402 families, comprising
 15,440 individuals, 10,000 persons can read, and

only 1626 Bibles were found, of which 283 are imperfect.

A similar inquiry is about to be instituted among the poor of *this district*, the result of which will hereafter be laid before the public. (See p. 78. note h.)

This, then, is the sacred cause to which your attention is solicited; and by contributing towards it your exertions, or your assistance, in any way, you will have the satisfaction of knowing, that you have been engaged in furthering a work, which has for its end, the present and eternal welfare of all the families of the earth; which tends, materially, to ameliorate the moral and religious state of the poor of our native land, by putting into their possession that Book which teaches them the value of their own souls; which requires submission to “every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake;” which tends to strengthen the bands of civil society by extirpating vice and immorality, and promoting true religion and virtue; which binds all hearts together in love to God, and love to man; which softens the pressure of the times, and the diffusion of which, renders this happy island a highly honoured instrument in converting to the knowledge of the true God all the nations, which are now sunk in heathenism, superstition, and ignorance.

Viewing then the constitution of this Society—its exalted patronage and support—its vast and increasing usefulness—its grandeur and sublimity of design—who can avoid saying, O ! highly favoured England, thou art indeed blessed above all the countries of the earth ! Whilst the surrounding kingdoms and empires, *where the Religion of the Bible has been but little known*, are tottering on their foundations, and falling, with hideous ruin, on all sides ; whilst ungovernable ambition is drenching the earth with human blood—burning—devastating—destroying with insatiable fury,—thou art preserved ; some guardian Angel seems to hover over thy peaceful shores, saying, *Destroy not this land, for A BLESSING IS IN IT.*

The example of the City of London, and of the neighbouring districts, it is earnestly hoped, the inhabitants of Hackney and its Vicinity, will not be backward in following ; proving on the present occasion, their regard to that cause, for which the Martyrs of the primitive ages, the Fathers of the Established Church, and the Reformers in various parts of the world, *laid down their lives*. The universal circulation of the Scriptures was *their* grand and favourite object.

In the course of a short time, a General Meeting will be called, for the purpose of giving effect to the

designs which we have endeavoured briefly to sketch; and every friend to religion, to his country, to good order, and to the comfort of the poorer classes, is solicited to attend, and give his assistance to the establishing of an Auxiliary Bible Society, for a district to include Hackney, Homerton, Clapton, Stamford Hill, Newington, Newington Green, Kingsland, Shacklewell, Dalston, and the neighbourhood; and of which further notice will be given.

Nov. 12th, 1812.

VII.

A Counter Address to the Inhabitants of Hackney, on the Proposed Formation of an Auxiliary Bible Society, for that Parish and its Vicinity.

WHEN our Saviour enjoined his disciples to “go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature,” it was evidently his intention that the Gospel should be *preached*. Those then who attempt to propagate the Gospel, without the intervention of a *preaching ministry*, by the mere circulation of the Scriptures, do not fulfil our Saviour’s

intentions; but forsake the way in which he ordained his own religion to be taught, and mark out a new way of their own.

It becomes those, therefore, who are called upon to forward such a design, to consider, whether, to neglect the positive commands of our Divine Master, and to follow our own inventions in preference to his directions, are the best methods of promoting his glory, or the most likely means of procuring his blessing upon our endeavours.

Much has been said and written of the wonderful encouragement which the Bible Society has met with; and the success of its exertions in canvassing for new Subscribers has been rather presumptuously stated as a proof that the blessing of God is with it. Men who think more deeply will surely pause before they allow that the favour and support of men is a sure proof of the assistance and approbation of God. Referring to the concurrent testimony of universal history, no less sacred than prophane, they will see perhaps abundant cause to adopt the directly opposite conclusion.

That the Bible Society has met with great and unexampled support is certainly true; but it is also true, that it does not require a very intimate knowledge of the human heart, nor a very deep investi-

gation of the secret springs by which bodies of men are actuated, to discover the reasons why it has been thus patronised.

If we admit the Dissenters to possess discernment to see, and perseverance to pursue, the line of conduct best calculated to advance their interests, we shall not wonder at the support which *they* have given to this Society. And if we make proper allowances for the inconsideration of some among our brethren of the Church, and for the morbid liberality of others ; if we only believe, that those who are ready to do good, are more in number than those who know how good is to be done ; that there are not a few, whose benevolence of heart and purity of intention subject them to be occasionally misled by persons who have more zeal than judgment or knowledge ; we shall then be able to account for much of the encouragement which this Society has received from Churchmen of different ranks. It will not be necessary to impeach the principles or the motives of any of its adherents : we only request permission to differ from them in opinion as to the mode of carrying into effect an object, which every zealous Christian may be supposed to have equally at heart, namely, the promotion of true religion in the world ; we only beg to be allowed to think that the Bible Society is not the channel through which a Churchman should

endeavour to diffuse the streams of Christian knowledge.

It has been intimated to you, that “ notwithstanding the general interest excited by the British and Foreign Bible Society, many are not accurately acquainted with its *constitution*, its *professed object*, and its *direct and ultimate tendency*.”

As the paper which contains this observation by no means supplies the deficiency on which it remarks ; as in fact it contains nothing more than an *ex parte* statement, a repetition of assertions which have never been proved, and of arguments which have been often refuted, those who wish to form a correct judgment on these several points should inquire what has been said on the other side.

The constitution of the Bible Society has one characteristic peculiarity, which you would do well to consider before you connect yourselves with it. It is so framed as to give a decided superiority to the Dissenters, whenever they choose to exert it. This has already been proved to a demonstration by various writers on the subject, and the proof need not be repeated here. Churchmen, who really wish the prosperity of that Establishment, of which they are professed Members, will doubtless see, in this important feature of the Institution, reasons for withholding their support from it.

Its professed object, the circulation of the Holy Scriptures without *note or comment*, is, you are told by the advocates of the Society, “the most noble which ever entered into the mind of man.”

Those on the contrary, who feel it to be their duty to resist its progress, steadily maintain that to circulate the Bible without *note or comment*, is not the most useful mode of distributing it; nay more, they are convinced that the supporters of the Bible Society are in reality of the same opinion. The question may be brought to a short issue: *notes and comments* that is, explanations of the Bible are necessary, or they are not. If they are necessary, why distribute the Bible without them? Why call a circulation of the Scriptures, when thus deprived of that which is necessary to give them their full effect, “the noblest object that ever entered into the mind of man?” Or if *comments and notes* are wholly unnecessary (which however the most strenuous advocate of the Bible Society will hardly venture to maintain) then every exposition, oral or written, must be equally superfluous—The provision made by our blessed Lord for the perpetual continuance of an order of men whose duty it should be to *preach* and to *teach*, must be wholly unnecessary; and the writings of every divine since the days of the Apostles may be instantly committed to the flames as useless lumber. But no; these

good and well-intentioned persons mean no such thing. They are all as well convinced of the necessity of *notes and comments*, of *preachers* and *expositors*, as their opponents. But as they have banded themselves together in one Society, with *all men of all opinions*; and as that Society cannot, from its very constitution, come to any determination as to the *true* mode of explaining the Holy Scriptures, they are therefore obliged to agree to circulate them without any exposition at all. It is a measure to which the necessity of the case, not any conviction of its propriety, must have compelled them to resort. The boldness with which this *radical defect* in the object of the Society has since been represented *as its peculiar merit*, may be politic, and profitable to the cause it was meant to serve; how far it redounds to the credit of the parties who have adopted it, reflecting persons will determine for themselves.

Of the *tendencies* of this Society we shall best judge by considering its effects. What these may *ultimately* be, He only knows to whom present and future are equally clear; and who sometimes permits *evil* to flourish with a merciful intention of turning it to good. But of its direct and immediate effects every one may form a judgment. They are and have been the same in every quarter whither its influence has reached. This wonderful

Society, which, if it cannot reconcile all opinions, is by some new moral chemistry “to *unite all hearts*,” has invariably begun its operations in every place by scattering the seeds of discord. Wherever it has been introduced, it has occasioned controversies; it has set the *Flock* in opposition to its *Pastor*, and the *Minister* at variance with his *Brother*. Of this *tendency* you have an instance before your eyes. The Society appeals to the parishioners at large—against whom? Against their *Vicar*, who has declared that the establishment which it seeks to obtain in his parish is not in his opinion desirable or proper: against the decision of the *Vestry*, who have publicly expressed their perfect coincidence in opinion with the *Vicar*, and their determination to support him: and against their *Bishop*, who has avowed that he disapproves of the formation of such Institutions. This is a tolerable specimen of the kind of union and peace which this Society is calculated to promote. And when you consider that, what is now doing in your own district, has been already done, or will be attempted in every corner of the kingdom, you will judge for yourselves whether the labours of such a body will “unite all hearts,” and whether “its direct tendency is sufficient to gladden the heart of every disciple of our Lord.”

With respect to the labours of the Society

abroad, the theme upon which all its panegyrists have delighted to expatiate, not a few of whom have been led, by their zeal in the cause, to make assertions, which it was equally difficult to maintain, and awkward to retract,—it will be only necessary to state a fact or two by way of illustrating the subject, and then you may be referred, for more ample information, to the invaluable publication by Dr. Marsh, from which these facts shall be extracted^b.

I. The British and Foreign Bible Society, far from translating the Holy Scriptures *into any one language into which they had not been previously translated*, has not even so translated any two of the Gospels. The utmost merit it can claim from this branch of its much extolled labours is this: that it has translated *one* and that *the shortest of the four Gospels*, into *two languages*, in which no part of the Scriptures had been previously translated.

II. It boasts of having “liberally afforded the necessary pecuniary aid to the great plan of translating the Scriptures into all the principal Eastern dialects.” The true state of the case is this—the missionaries at Serampore, had been engaged for

^b Vid. Professor Marsh’s History of the Translations which have been made of the Scriptures.

nine years in printing, and *fifteen years* in translating the Scriptures into those dialects, before they ever received the *least aid* from the Bible Society. They had before received 14,000*l.* from other sources; and they declared that they wanted *nothing* from England to enable them to execute their grand design, but an annual supply of 1000*l.* which they uninterruptedly received from their own (the Baptist) Society. Thus amply provided, thus munificently patronized, they asked, they desired *nothing more*; and they probably would not feel much indebted to the Bible Society, which in 1809 sent them 1000*l.* which *they did not want*, did they know that it *had thus contrived to deprive them of the credit*, to which their unparalleled labours and persevering zeal had justly entitled them.

If we return to the labours of this Society at home, it is undoubtedly true that Bibles have been given away, not only with liberality but *profusion*. Whether the effects resulting from such a distribution have, in any degree, answered the intentions of the distributors, they have not perhaps yet found time to enquire. But one thing is certain, which probably they did not anticipate. The reverence, in which the Scriptures are held by the lower classes, has by no means increased in proportion to the ease with which they are to be obtained.

An indiscreet and indiscriminate bounty has, in this instance, produced its usual result. That which was easily gained, is readily parted with: and whereas before the labours of this Society, the Bible was the last possession, which the severity of distress forced from the grasp of the poor, it is now become a common article of traffic: and if the shops of the pawnbrokers are not filled with copies of the Scriptures issued originally from the stores of the Bible Society, it is because *they* have hesitated to receive them, not because the poor are unwilling to dispose of them.

One word more and I have done—you are told, that in a short time a general meeting of the Hackney district will be called for the purpose of establishing an Auxiliary Bible Society. In the interval endeavour to make yourselves so far masters of the subject, as to answer the following questions :

1st. Is the Bible Society an Institution to which, as Churchmen, you can *safely* contribute?

2d. Is there not *another Society*, which, if you join it, will enable you to do more good than you can do as Members of the Bible Society, and that without any possible mixture of evil or danger to the Church to which you belong?

3d. If after all you determine upon supporting the Bible Society, will it not be as easy to subscribe to its fund in London as at Hackney? and will you not prefer the *former* course to aiding a design which will *sow dissension in the Parish*; a design which the *Vestry*, the *Vicar*, and the *Bishop* have concurred in representing as unnecessary and inexpedient?

Consider these things well, and may God give you a right judgment in all things.

A WELL-WISHER TO THE PEACE OF THE
PARISH OF HACKNEY.

VIII.

Both Sides of the Question, or a Churchman's Reasons for discountenancing, and his Reply to the Inducements urged for promoting the Establishment of an Auxiliary Bible Society, in Hackney.

THAT the views of the friends of the Establishment, who oppose the formation of a Bible Society in this Parish, may not be misrepresented, it seems necessary to have it distinctly understood, that they

do not object to giving away the Bible, but to forming an Association for that purpose, upon terms which their religious principles, and (as they conceive) the Scriptures themselves equally disallow. They consider that, *for the purpose of distributing the Scriptures*, there is no necessity for their uniting with those who depart from the Church to which they belong. And they are apprehensive, that, *according to the plan on which the Bible is now proposed to be given away*, it will not be productive of the good it was intended to produce.

Viewing the subject in this light, they are desirous that every man who is invited to join this Association, should not suffer his judgment to be led away by his feelings, nor hastily yield to enthusiastic impressions. They entreat every one dispassionately to consider, whether there is not *Scriptural Authority* for affirming, that the Bible itself contains matter that is above the ordinary apprehensions of mankind; and that it is casting no reproach whatever on the inspired Word of God, to say with St. Peter, that there are in it “some things hard to be understood.”

It is, therefore, the authority of the Bible itself

which they cite, in declaring that there is need for something *more* than this Association professes to secure. Acquiescing in the wisdom of its Omniscient Author, they believe there is need for a *Ministry* duly learned and qualified, to “*compare* spiritual things with spiritual^d.”—rightly to “*divide* the Word of Truth^e,”—and to “*open*^f” and “*expound*^g” the Scriptures. While they acknowledge the sufficiency of the Scriptures, they do not acknowledge its sufficiency to supersede the Ministry, whose authority it expressly recognizes and confirms^h. For this reason, they deem it expedient to accompany the Bible with the Liturgy of the Church of England, and with various religious Tracts, written or approved by the Members and Ministers of that Church; not (as it has been injuriously asserted) to be *correctives* to the *Bible*, but as helps and guides to those *Readers*, who, being “unlearned and unstable,” might otherwise “wrest it to their destructionⁱ.”

Such is the plea which the friends of the Establishment offer in their defence, when they are accused of lukewarmness or indifference, respecting the circulation of the Holy Scriptures. Their an-

^d 1 Cor. ii. 13.

^e 2 Tim. ii. 15.

^f Acts xvii. 3.

^g Luke xxiv. 27, 32.

^h Acts viii. 30, 31.

ⁱ 2 Pet.

iii. 16.

swer to the popular arguments urged in favour of the new Society by its most admired advocates, they conceive to be no less conclusive.

These advocates take notice, that it was the last injunction of our blessed Saviour to his disciples, that they should “go and *preach the Gospel* to every creature^k.” But these words relate to the authority of those who were commissioned to *teach* the Word, not to the Word itself without a Teacher. The injunction is to the *Apostles*, not to the whole body of Christians,—it is, to *preach* the Word, not merely to distribute the Bible.

It is observed also, that we read in the sublime Prophecy of Daniel, that “the Stone which was cut out without hands, became a great mountain; and filled the whole earth;” and in Isaiah, that “in the last days the mountain of the Lord’s house should be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it.” These are Prophecies relating to the general diffusion of the Gospel throughout the heathen world. But they have no particular reference to the *means* by which it should be spread. And if they had, they must be interpreted according to St. Paul’s reasoning upon

* Mark xvi. 15.

these and other predictions of the same kind.—
 “ How shall they hear without a *Preacher?* and
 “ how shall they preach, except they be *sent?* As
 “ it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them
 “ that *preach* the Gospel of peace, and bring glad
 “ tidings of good things¹!” The authority of Pro-
 phesy, therefore, according to the apostolical inter-
 pretation of it, is on our side, not on that of the Ad-
 vocates, for endeavouring to spread the Gospel,
 without regard to the instrumental means of its cir-
 culation.

But, to descend from scriptural arguments to
 considerations of inferior moment, we are told, that
 “ the mere statement of facts respecting this new
 “ Society, viz. 100,000*l.* expended on the Scrip-
 “ tures—half a million of Copies circulated—nu-
 “ merous Translations and Editions—friendly and
 “ Auxiliary Societies established, and establishing,
 “ in various parts of the world—during eight years
 “ only—will surely prove that the British and Fo-
 “ reign Bible Society is, in its direct and ultimate
 “ tendency, pregnant with the richest blessings to
 “ the whole family of Man.”—We reply, that these
 facts, (supposing them to be not at all over-stated
 or exaggerated) do not, in our estimation, suffici-
 ently establish the *success* of the Society; meaning

¹ Rom. x. 15.

by its *success*, the *good* that it has actually done. The great objects with every judicious and well-instructed Christian will be, to make men converts to pure Christianity, or to preserve them in the sound knowledge and practice of it; not merely to multiply copies of the Holy Scriptures. But to the attainment of the former objects, both the reason of the thing, and Scripture itself, will teach us, that the course adopted by this Society is altogether insufficient; because it *excludes* from its design that help and guidance which the Word of God hath enjoined us to resort to, for the preservation of “the Faith once delivered to the Saints^m” from error and corruption.

With regard to the *Patronage* of which this Society so highly boasts, it is to be observed, that if *some* Churchmen have joined this coalition, many *more*, it should seem, have declined uniting with it;—that, of those who *have* united with it, none have advanced any thing in its defence which has not been fully answered;—and that of those who have *not* joined it, some have come forward with a statement of such objections to it as have not yet received any satisfactory reply.

“The wants of the Poor,” it is declared, “are

^m Jude 3,

“ much greater than have been imagined.” By means of “ a very careful and impartial inquiry “ in the City of London, it was found that above “ one half was destitute of the Word of Life.” But will this Institution supply this true want of *religious knowledge* : and are we to infer that all “ are destitute of the Word of Life” who “ are not “ possessed of either a Bible or a Testament,” while they are publicly read and explained in our Churches? Every thinking person on making full allowances in the present *calculation*, will readily discover its fallacy. From the number of those who, they are informed, are destitute of the Bible, they will subduct those who cannot *read* it when they receive it ; those who will not *open* it if they can read it ; who will not *understand* it if they read it ; and who will not *obey* it when they understand it : and will consequently find the numbers so reduced as to render the interference of this Society perfectly useless. Of those who *may be benefited* by having the Bible, there are few who are not able to purchase it ; there are none who may not have it through that Society which the Church approves and has instituted.

As for those who search after authorities among our first Reformers, in favour of an expedient devised within these last eight years, they deserve but little notice. The Reformation undertaken by

those excellent persons, they accomplished, not on the principles of this novel Institution, but on those which the Church itself had derived from our Lord and his Apostles. What *their* sentiments would have been of such an association as this, we can be at no loss to conceive: nor do we merely cite their names, but produce their opinions, in testimony of what we advance. “We cannot,” says the venerable Bp. Latimer, “be saved without God’s Word; it is a necessary way to Salvation. We cannot be saved without Faith: and Faith cometh by *hearing* the word: And how shall they hear without a *Preacher*? I tell you it is the footsteps of the ladder of heaven of our Salvation. *There must be Preachers, if we look to be saved.*—St. Peter sheweth that one place of Scripture declareth another. It is the *circumstance* and *collation* of places, that *make Scripture plain*. But we are regenerate, saith St. Peter, and we be born again. How? Not by a mortal seed, but by an immortal. What is this immortal seed? By the word of the living God, by the word of God, *preached* and *opened*. Thus cometh in our new birth.” VI. Serm. before K. Edw. fol. 72, 73.

In a word, were those who evince so much *zeal* in dispersing the Bible, to exhibit but a little *knowledge* in quoting it, while they presume it to be in-

telligible to every one by whom it is perused, they would not only have anticipated the objections urged against them from its authority, but have discovered that it acknowledges no principle of *unity* but “one
 “ body, and one spirit, one hope of our calling, one
 “ Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Fa-
 “ ther of all.” This is that “unity of the Spirit
 “ and bond of Peace,” in which Christians are to unite ; and not merely in the distribution of the Bible. If the Bible were thoroughly read, and understood, and respected, those Ordinances of the Christian Church the Christian Sacraments, would not be superseded to make way for new terms of Communion ; nor would there be any obstacle to a general union of Christians, not indeed upon terms invented within these eight years past, but upon those enjoined by the great “ Author and Finisher
 “ of our Faith,” even “ Jesus Christ, the same
 “ yesterday, to day, and for ever.”

A CHURCHMAN.

Hackney, Nov. 27th, 1812.

IX.

Remarks on the "Counter Address" to the Inhabitants of Hackney, on the proposed Formation of an Auxiliary Bible-Society; and on a Paper entitled "Both Sides of the Question," &c. &c. by J. W. Freshfield. With Animadversions by the Editor.

AS the "Counter-Address" to the inhabitants of Hackney, contains statements, positions, and reasonings, calculated to mislead those who are either wholly unacquainted, or but partially conversant with, the nature, object, and proceedings, of the BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE-SOCIETY, I trust I shall be excused for inviting the attention of the inhabitants of HACKNEY to the following remarks on that extraordinary paper.

1. The British and Foreign Bible-Society is treated as if it were the design of the Institution, and the very purpose of its Advocates, to supersede the office of preaching,^a and the use of all expla-

^a If this is not the design of the Institution, why do its advocates boast of its *having preached the Gospel?* and to what purpose was the last injunction of our Saviour to his Apostles, that they should "go and preach the Gospel to every creature" placed at the head of the "Address?" If the supporters of

natory aids to the understanding of the Bible. The fact is this: the Bible-Society has selected for its^b *exclusive* object, the circulation of the Holy Scriptures: It has made this exclusive selection, with the hope,—a hope which has been amply justified of^c engaging Christians, without any ex-

the Bible Society mean that, by distributing the Bible it really preaches the Gospel, then they represent it as virtually superseding the preacher's office. If they do not mean this, it becomes them to shew what they really do mean; and to reconcile, (if they can) to the principles of honest and fair dealing, the assumption of a character to which, according to Mr. Freshfield's own admission, the Society is not entitled. Let them beware lest

— moveat cornicula risum
Furtivis nudata coloribus. HOR.

Ed.

^b If this is its *exclusive object* it will furnish every sound Churchman with a strong reason for preferring the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, for unless it can be proved, that the mere Letter of Scripture is as likely to make men good Christians, as that Scripture when accompanied by a proper interpretation, the Society which pursues the latter mode of distribution will certainly deserve to be preferred before that which adopts the former.

^c Quo teneam vultus mutantem Protea nodo? Here is another object, besides the *exclusive object*, to which after all only a secondary rank seems to be allowed. For the circulation of the Bible, *without note or comment*, now appears to have been adopted with the hope that by its means, that *spurious kind of union* between “Christians without any exception” might be produced, which, as it constitutes the grand aim of the Society,

ception, in its support; and thereby insuring a more immediate, extensive, and effectual, circulation of the Word of God. Now if guides and tracts be useful, as expository of the Holy Scriptures, they can only be so (at least in a safe^d degree,) to those who are already possessed of them: *How, therefore, a Society which furnishes the very text, which it is the office of the preacher, and the object of the commentator, to expound, can be designed to supersede both, is a paradox*^e

so does it afford to every sound and zealous Churchman the most serious cause of alarm.

^d “If spiritual guides are only useful in a safe degree to those who are already possessed of the Scriptures,” in what a state of peril must the primitive Christians have been left, when copies of the Scriptures were so rare as scarcely to be in the possession of any private individual.

The mode which the Divine Author of our holy religion adopted for its promulgation must appear a dangerous one to Mr. F. He sent out the preachers first: and they had been long engaged as guides before it was possible for the Scriptures to be in the possession of the people. Will Mr. F. assert that “spiritual guides were not useful in a safe degree” during the early ages of the Church? or that they have not been safely useful to those many millions of believers, who not being able to read the Scriptures even if they were in their possession, are still left wholly to their care?

^e The Society which asserts, that by furnishing the text of Scripture it has “preached the Gospel;” that it “has done more for the diffusion of Christianity than has been effected in the same time in any age since the apostolic:” and that

which I must leave to be solved by those who have had the ingenuity to construct it.

2. The constitution of this Society is represented in the Counter-Address to be "so framed" as to give a decided superiority to the Dissenters, whenever they choose to exert it." "The facility^f of making assertions, (says Mr. Gis-

"the Bible alone is able to give wisdom to the simple;" certainly goes far towards superseding the office of the Preacher, and the object of the Commentator. And when it claims to itself the merit of having done all that the preacher was appointed to do; and that the Bible, as circulated by it, is alone competent to all which the commentator proposes by his labours; as the evident *tendency* of such conduct is to supersede both, the alledged paradox in supposing such to be its design is not very perceivable.

^f Whatever may be the facility of making assertions, Mr. F. must be convinced by his own experience, that the facility of repeating assertions often made, and as often refuted, is equally great. This very mode of forming the Committee has been referred to again and again by those who have written on the other side of the question, for proof of their position, that the Bible Society is so constituted as to afford a decided superiority to the Dissenters. By what magic does Mr. F. expect that by re-stating it here he shall make it prove the very opposite? As Mr. Gisborne has been quoted, it may be allowable to observe, that, but for this remark of his, which Mr. F. deems so pertinent, it would perhaps have been no easy matter for many hearers and readers of that far-famed speech to account for some of the assertions it contains.

“borrie, in his late speech at the Chester meeting,) appears on many occasions to correspond with the difficulty of proving them.” Let us see how this remark applies to the assertion under consideration :—

The Committee of the Society consists of 36 lay members, of whom six are foreigners; and, of the remaining 30, half are members of the Established Church, and the other half, members of other Christian denominations. The president, vice-presidents, and treasurer, are ex officio members of the Committee; so are all clergymen who are members of the Society, donors of 50 guineas, and subscribers of 5 guineas annually. And therefore, inasmuch as the members of the Church of England are to the Dissenters, as well in point of property as of number, in a ratio of great superiority, the “Counter-Address” would have described the Society with more accuracy had it represented its constitution to be “*so framed as to give a decided superiority, (not to the Dissenters, but) to the members of the Established Church whenever they choose to exert it.*”

3. On the *tendencies* of the Society, the “Counter-Address” observes, that it “scatters the seeds of discord.” The truth is, the Society

invites^s to *union*. It is optional with the parties to whom its overtures are made, whether they will accept them or not: many persons, I am persuaded, abstain from uniting with it, on the most conscientious and honourable grounds: of those, whether vestry-men, clergy, or prelates, it would be unjust, uncharitable, and even indecorous, to speak, if it be necessary to speak of them at all, in any other terms than those of forbearance and respect. But if steps are taken to traduce the Society as hostile to the Church and to peace: if the *vestry*, the *vicar*, and the *bishop*, are to be

^s The Society calls upon Churchmen to join Dissenters; although the certain consequence of doing so must be alienation from their brethren. Such is the union which it proposes. An abandonment of the true Christian unity of spirit, for the sake of forming a mere nominal connection between persons who will not differ from each other one iota the less on account of the junction. Unless indeed the Churchman be induced to compliment the Dissenter by renouncing his orthodoxy. If this be the object of the Bible Society, it may call the proposal an invitation to union, but there can be no doubt, that St. Paul would have denominated it a temptation to schism. A mighty man of former days, and a sore enemy to the existing supremacy of his time, conceived a project of union not unlike this, when he tied the foxes tail to tail, and sent them to carry firebrands into the standing corn of the Philistines. The animals, though their heads all turned different ways, appear to have acted with wonderful unanimity in accomplishing the work of destruction to which they were appointed.

set in array against such inhabitants of a populous parish, as may choose to follow the example of so many other parishes in the kingdom, by uniting in a *local* institution in support of it: if they are to be pretty roundly told, that, in adopting such a measure, they must expect to be regarded and held up as abettors of spiritual schism, and parochial variances; the guilt^h of "scattering the seeds of discord," and, I may add, of watering them too, will be, not with the friends of the Institution, but with those who employ such unwarrantable means of opposing and calumniating them.

4. "With respect to the labours of the Society abroad, the "Counter-Address" informs us, that the panegyrists of the Society have been led by their zeal, to make assertions which it was equally difficult to maintain, and awkward to re-

^h So to remind the parishioners that, as Members of the Established Church, it becomes them to follow the directions of their Vicar, who is acting under the sanction of their Bishop, is to "scatter and water the seeds of discord." The persons who provoke a contest are generally accounted chargeable with the guilt of it, not those who take proper steps to check their progress, by appealing to that authority which was given for the express purpose of maintaining order in the Church. May it be allowable to ask Mr. F. what are his ideas of the duties owed by Churchmen to their Spiritual Fathers?

“tract.” Let us see whether the calumniators¹ of

¹ It is yet to be shewn who the calumniators of the Society are. Calumny, says Dr. Johnson, is a slander, a false charge, a groundless accusation. Mr. F. must be more fortunate in his attempts at argument than he has hitherto been, before he can succeed in attaching to his opponents in this controversy either of the above ingredients of calumny. The Bible Society has been described as an unnatural coalition of Churchmen and Dissenters, persons who never can cordially agree as to the *proper mode* of accomplishing the object they mutually profess to pursue, and therefore have adopted one, which each of them in his individual capacity cannot but allow to be wholly incompetent to the purpose. Is this slander? It has moreover been asserted, that the tendency of this Society is to divide the Church, by sowing the seeds of disunion among those, who, by all the ties which can bind them as professors and teachers of one common faith, and servants of one common Master, are obliged to live in mutual harmony and peace. Is this a false charge? No—it is a fact—a melancholy one indeed; but a fact to which the recorded proceedings of almost every Auxiliary Bible Society in the kingdom bear unimpeachable testimony. It has also been said, that the advocates of the Bible Society have uncharitably and untruly represented their opponents as actuated by motives, which they must know could not influence them, inasmuch as they have asserted, that they are hostile to the dispersion of the Scriptures, at the same time that their overt acts have proved them to be zealously employed in that excellent work. Is this a groundless accusation? Let Mr. F. consult the speeches and the writings of his coadjutors in the task of defending the Bible Society, and answer the question for himself. If, however, his investigations fail to furnish him with sufficient

the Society have acted in this respect with more discretion.

1. "The British and Foreign Bible Society, (says the "Counter-Address^k,")) far from translating

proof, the Editor has abundance at his service, which nothing but regard for the situation and character of those, who have unwisely been led to stand forth as the accusers of their brethren, prevents him from now bringing forward. Away then with the charge of calumny. Controversy, necessary and unavoidable as it is, has evils enough attached to it, as it is too commonly conducted; they need not be aggravated by the use of hard words and railing epithets. Mr. F. may also not improperly be reminded of the homely proverb, which advises him who begins throwing stones to look well to his own windows.

^k It will not be difficult to prove, that the author of the Counter Address has not in this instance earned for himself the reproachful name of calumniator. In order to shew what had been the real extent of the foreign operations of the Bible Society, he quoted the words of Dr. Marsh, in his "History of the Translations," and referred his readers to the work itself for farther information. As that excellent pamphlet has never yet been answered, it is to be presumed that the assertions it contains are fully admitted; and that it presents a fair statement of the Society's labours, up to the time of its publication. What has been done since certainly had nothing to do with the question before Dr. Marsh; nor could it in candour be supposed, that the author of the Counter Address, by quoting him, meant to extend his assertions beyond the period to which he referred. It appears then that the charge of calumny is misplaced. But it may

“ the Holy Scriptures into any one language, into
 “ which they had not been previously translated,

not be amiss to pursue the subject a little farther, for the purpose of removing altogether the ground of that vain confidence of boasting, which is so unwisely adhered to. It is not then to be denied, that, while the advocates of the Society were claiming for it the merit of having “ preached “ the Gospel in fifty-four languages,” of having “ translated “ the Scriptures into no less than forty-three languages or “ dialects;” it had not in reality translated any two of the Gospels into any one language into which they had not been previously translated; and the translations which had been made, viz. St. Mark’s Gospel into the Bugis and Macassar dialects, had not been printed. Mr. F. does not attempt to disprove this; but he scruples not to accuse the Counter-Address of calumny; because, since the time to which that paper plainly refers, St. Matthew’s Gospel has been translated into two languages or dialects, St. Mark’s into three, St. Luke’s, and part of St. John’s, into one. Still no evidence is offered by Mr. F. that any of these translations have been *printed*. Though until that be done, the professed object of the Society can scarcely be said to have been in any respect accomplished. The fact being thus fairly and dispassionately stated, the conclusion shall be left with the reader. Only he is requested to bear in mind, that this wonderful Society, which is represented as having so far exceeded in the success of its exertions in this particular all that has gone before it, cannot, after being stimulated by a charge striking at the very foundation of that character which it has laboured so hard to build up for itself, prove that it has in reality preached the Gospel (even in its own sense of the words) in foreign languages at all: as the

“ has not even so much as translated any two of
 “ the Gospels.”

To this assertion, the following authentic statement, from the 75th page of the Appendix, to the Society's 8th Report, (a document which has been four months before the public,) shall furnish a reply.

“ Dr. Leyden has delivered to the secretary the
 “ following manuscript, viz.

sum total of its labours consists in having translated a very inconsiderable portion of the New Testament into five of the Asiatic dialects, viz. St. Mark's Gospel into five: St. Matthew's into two of these five: St. Luke's, and the latter part of St. John's, into one of them. So that the whole of the four Gospels has not yet been translated into any one language; and of the portions which have been translated, not one has hitherto been of the smallest use to the natives for whom they were intended, as they are not any of them *printed*. And now let Mr. F., if he can, exclaim against misrepresentation, and call those calumniators who strip off the mask of delusion from his favourite idol. If it can be proved, that, in any one instance, those who have written against the Bible Society have magnified its defects or its follies, let them bear the due reproach of such conduct; but let Mr. F. also take shame to himself for having so injudiciously identified himself with those, who, to procure the support of the credulous and unwary, have ventured so grossly to exaggerate its labours.

“ 1. *Pushtu.*

“ St. Matthew's Gospel,

“ St. Mark's Gospel.

“ 2. *Maldivian.*

“ St. Matthew's Gospel,

“ St. Mark's Gospel,

“ St. Luke's Gospel,

“ St. John's Gospel, (part 2.)

“ 3. *Baloch.*

“ St. Mark's Gospel.

“ 4. *Macasar.*

“ St. Mark's Gospel.

“ 5. *Bugis.*

“ St. Mark's Gospel.

“ In all, nine Gospels.”

2. On the question of relative merit between the British and Foreign Bible Society, and the Baptist Society in this country, little need be said. Attempts have been made to set these bodies at variance; but they are too well acquainted with the object of those who are commending the latter, at the expence of the former, to fall into the snare. Some notice must, however, be taken of the asser-

tions and insinuations, in reference to this subject, contained in the "Counter-Address."

It is *asserted*¹, that the Baptist Missionaries had been many years at work in translating and printing the Scriptures, before the Bible Society aided them. The Bible Society not only does not dispute this priority of operation on the part of the Baptist Missionaries, but has expressly published the fact in the Appendix to its first Report, in 1805. It is *asserted*^m, that the Baptist Society would provide translations for India, without help from the Bible-Society. Now, when it is known, that there are sixty millions of Hindoos and Mahomedans in that part of India which is dependent on

¹ This assertion is made upon the authority of the Baptist Missionaries themselves.

^m Mr. F. has here varied from the phrase of the "Counter-Address." It is there asserted, on the authority of their own statements as referred to by Dr. Marsh, that the Baptist Missionaries were engaged in translating and printing the Scriptures in the principal dialects of Asia; and that, according to their own declaration, to enable them to complete their grand design, they wanted nothing more from England, in addition to their own funds in India, than the annual 1000l. provided for them by their own Society. As Mr. F. cannot be supposed capable of having designedly altered the language of the Counter-Address, for the purpose of more easily refuting its statements, he will doubtless be obliged to the Editor for pointing out the unintentional misrepresentation.

the British Government,—that beyond those limits there are the isles of the Indian Archipelago, the Chinese Empire, and various Asiatic nations: all which are contemplated in the measures now carrying forward:—When it is further considered that there are nearly a million native Christians for whose use, primarily, the Calcutta Auxiliary Bible Society has been instituted,—and the president of which institution expressly states, that, with an income of 2000l. a year, it will be a work of years to supply the demand which exists for the Word of God among the different denominations of Indian Christians: (See the 8th Report, Appendix, p. 9.)—When these particulars are taken into consideration, it must be by a strange sort of computation that one religious Society, and that bearing a denomination not adapted to conciliate the greater number of Christians in its favour, could, by its solitary resources, accomplish a work of such prodigious labour, and almost boundless expence.

It is *insinuated*ⁿ, that the Baptist missionaries do not feel themselves much obliged to the Bible-

ⁿ The Counter-Address does not deal in insinuations. It does indeed say, that, if the Baptist missionaries knew that the Bible Society had contrived to deprive them of the credit to which they were justly entitled, they probably would not feel much indebted to it. This is no insinuation.

Society for the aid which it has afforded them. Let us see how the fact stands. In a letter to the secretary of the Calcutta Auxiliary Bible Society, dated, Mission-House, Sept. 4, 1811, and signed by Dr. Carey, and Messrs. Marshman and Ward, the heads of that mission, is the following record of their gratitude :

“ Reverend and dear Sir,

“ We beg you will make our best acknowledgments to the British and Foreign Bible-Society, *for the liberal assistance they have so often and so generously afforded us*, and particularly for the last donation of 500l.”

5. On the labours of the Society *at home*, it is only necessary to observe, that, if the Society's bounty has been abused, (of which however no evidence^o is adduced,) the formation of Auxiliary

but a simple statement of feelings which it is natural to suppose that persons so treated would entertain. The Author of the Counter-Address may therefore venture to repeat that they have full reason so to feel; and moreover to record his opinion, that the mere civil acknowledgment of pecuniary assistance, which they neither wanted nor desired, is assuredly no proof to the contrary.

^o Evidence could be adduced if it were necessary, and that of the most unexceptionable kind: evidence of the bounty of an auxiliary Bible Society having been abused: where, though the Scriptures were circulated through the

Societies, and consequently of that at Hackney, will operate as an antidote to such abuse in future, by circulating the Scriptures through the hands of those, who are by local connection most likely to be acquainted with the wants and the merits of the petitioners.

6. To the three questions proposed at the conclusion of the "Counter-Address," as an individual, I shall give the following answers :

1st. I should think it a libel on the bench of Bishops^p to doubt whether I could, as a churchman,

hands of those, who were by local connection most likely to be acquainted with the wants and merits of the petitioners, it was soon found that indiscriminate circulation had done harm ; that no regard was had to the *merits* of the petitioners ; and that the consequence of giving a Bible to every person who asked for it was precisely that, which all, but those who are blinded by enthusiasm, might have easily foreseen.

^p The value of this answer is about equal to its decency. It is difficult to conceive how it has escaped the notice of Mr. F. that this numerical statement proves rather more against his Society than for it. But though his argument, such as it is, may be safely left to the refutation it carries with it, his language requires animadversion ; and the more because it is by no means peculiar to himself, but is rather to be considered as characteristic of his Society.

A passage nearly parallel may be found in the Gloucester Journal of August 17, 1812, wherein a writer, who styles

safely join an Institution which reckons 20 out of 48 among its patrons or supporters.

himself "a clerical member of the British and Foreign Bible Society," thus addresses the Bishop of Gloucester. "It will not be easily credited, that an Institution can be prejudicial to the chartered Societies, or the established Church, which (not to mention others) numbers a Popten, a Barrington, and a Burgess, among its mitred Patrons and invariable friends." What are we to understand by this? To accuse these zealous promoters of union of a desire to sow dissension among the Bishops, would perhaps appear to savour of harshness. And notwithstanding their expressions may seem to bear *prima facie* evidence of such an intention, these writers, it is to be hoped, are too well aware of the desperate folly of such an attempt to feel any inclination to make it. Without however endeavouring to assign any motive for this language, as it respects the venerable Prelates themselves, it is allowable to consider it as bearing testimony to the real estimation in which this Society holds their opinions and their station. No persons are more ready to enlarge upon the respect due to episcopal authority, when it can be produced in their favour; none more systematically labour to vilify and degrade it, when it is opposed to their progress. The Bishops who have supported the Bible Society, have been extolled by its orators in terms which (with all possible respect for their character and office) it may be affirmed, are often marked by the most extravagant and disgusting adulation. One of its most respectable writers, though he could not condescend to the language of nauseating flattery, yet seems to have felt the full value of the argument from authority, and to have used it without sufficiently considering how easily it might be turned against him. "Such," says he, "are the terms of

" reprobation you bestow on a Society, which was patron-
 " ized by the late venerable and lamented Bishop of London;
 " which is still honoured with the patronage of the most
 " Reverend the Archbishop of Cashell, and the Right Rev.
 " the Lords Bishops of Durham, St. David's, Salisbury and
 " Bristol—few men of sober understanding will be in-
 " duced to believe that a Society patronized by such
 " characters can merit the imputations which you would
 " attach to it." Lord Teignmouth's Letter to Dr. Words-
 worth. The conduct of the Kent Auxiliary Bible Society
 may be cited, as a further proof of anxiety to represent the
 Institution as enjoying the countenance and support of the
 Bench. Having *applied* to the Archbishop for his patron-
 age, and received a positive refusal, in a letter addressed
 to the Mayor of Canterbury, the Committee in their address
 to the public did not scruple to condescend to a paltry ar-
 tifice, for the purpose of persuading its readers, that his
 Grace, and the Bishop of London, were friendly to the prin-
 ciple of their Establishment: appealing for proof of the fact
 to the support they had given to the Naval and Military
 Bible Society*. And this they ventured to do, although
 (besides the private reasons which the Archbishop's answer
 to their application had afforded them for knowing how much
 they had misrepresented his sentiments) it was notorious to
 the whole kingdom, that both these prelates had, in the most

* Were this the proper place, it would not be difficult to shew, that
 there is no kind of similarity between the principles of the two Societies;
 that they are, both in their object, and in their mode of carrying that
 object into execution, essentially dissimilar; consequently that patron-
 age afforded to the Naval and Military Bible-Society gives no proof of
 approbation of the British and Foreign Bible Society. It is known to
 the Editor that such is the opinion of his Grace the Archbishop: but
 this must be sufficiently obvious to every candid observer, without far-
 ther evidence to establish it.

marked and signal manner, expressed their disapprobation of the Society, and that one of the Archbishop's Chaplains, in a pamphlet dated from Lambeth Palace, and circulated with the privity and under the sanction of his Grace, had taken the lead in exposing its dangerous tendency.

But as a majority of the Bishops have refused to connect themselves with the Society, it has happened in not a few instances, that Episcopal authority has been cited against its Auxiliary Establishments. Such was the case at Gloucester; where the language of its advocates underwent, in consequence, a very striking alteration. A writer who styles himself "a clerical friend to all religious Institutions," addresses the Clergy of the diocese in the following terms.—
 "I ask, has he (the Bishop) forced his opinion upon you?
 "does he wish for you to pin your faith on his sleeve? does
 "he desire you to return to your infantile state? to become
 "mere babes, to have no mind of your own? Surely not.
 "In refusing to connect yourselves with the Bible Society
 "then, I ask, would you act from the firm conviction of
 "enlightened minds?" Gloucester Journal, September 14, 1812.

Language such as this requires no comment; nor does the Editor dare to trust his pen to make one. But he is aware it will be said, that the Society cannot fairly be made responsible for the language of every intemperate and anonymous writer, who may chuse to take up his pen in its defence. And the objection would have its weight, if it could be proved that any disapprobation of such a mode of advancing its cause had ever been expressed by its official and authorized advocates. He is not aware that any such disavowal is recorded. He has looked for it in vain. His researches, on the contrary, have furnished sufficient evidence that this writer, though perhaps more unguarded in his language than its more practised champions, has been pretty accurate in his expression.

of the sentiments of the Society. Mr. Gisborne, who appeared at the Meeting held at Chester for the formation of an Auxiliary Establishment, as the representative of Mr. Owen, the official organ of the Parent Society, did not scruple to conclude the eulogy upon the deceased Bishop Porteus, with which he was pleased to wind up his harangue upon that occasion, with an implied sarcasm, not only upon his successor in the See of London, but upon that Prelate also, in whose Cathedral city he had undertaken to advocate a measure, to which he knew him to be adverse.

“ That Prelate, (said the Rev. Orator speaking of Bishop Porteus) has now experienced how blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. He rests from his labours, and his works have followed him; and among those works, his good deeds on behalf of the Bible Society have their place. That sun is set: but this horizon long may glow with its reflected beams. The brightness of that Prelate’s example irradiates the path of the Bible Society over lands from which he is taken away; and shines to lead other Bishops of Chester, and other Bishops of London, to be—WHAT ONCE WAS BISHOP PORTEUS.”

Chester Courant, Nov. 24, 1812. The Editor would be sorry to impute to Mr. Gisborne any premeditated intention of outraging the feelings, or reflecting upon the conduct of two respectable Prelates: most happy will he be to attribute his words to motives more suitable to the sanctity of his profession, more in harmony with the general worth and benignity of his character. It is the language, not the motive of it, on which he feels called upon to comment. The tendency of it was evident. And where such language was received not only without disapprobation, but with unmingled and universal applause, it is not to be denied that no reverence for the Episcopal office, no respect for the persons by whom it is exercised could possibly have been felt.

2d. I know not “another Society”^a which has either sufficient latitude in its constitution, or

A similar spirit was manifested by the founders of the Prayer Book and Homily Society; which may be said to have grown out of the Bible Society, as it was projected and formed by those among its members, who, professing to belong to the Church, conceived that they could thus evade the objections of Dr. Marsh. These Gentlemen first solicited the patronage of the whole Bench of Bishops individually. But when this vénéralé Body signified to them its unanimous determination not to support the projected Institution, and its disapprobation of the measure altogether; the Meeting was held notwithstanding on the following day, and the Establishment completed without the aid of the Bishops, and in utter disregard of their opinion.

^a The indiscriminate circulation of the Scriptures in all languages and countries has already been shewn to be unnecessary and ineffectual. But there is nothing either in the constitution or the object of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, which prevents its Members from circulating them in any way, or to any extent they may think proper. The subscriber of one guinea per annum has an *unlimited privilege of applying for books*, Bibles, or otherwise, at the prices of the Society, as he may deem expedient, and of distributing them at his own discretion. A subscriber of one guinea per annum to the Bible Society is allowed, on the contrary, the privilege of purchasing Bibles and Testaments within the year at the reduced prices to the amount of five guineas only. Which Society affords the greatest facility to the dispersion of the Scriptures the reader may judge. If every Churchman would zealously labour to increase the funds of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, the assertion might be made

simplicity in its object, to qualify it for doing what the Bible-Society has undertaken to do, viz. *To promote the circulation of the Holy Scriptures, in all languages and countries, both at home and abroad.*

3d. As by becoming a member of an Auxiliary Society, I can obtain a greater privilege^r in procuring Bibles and Testaments; I can ensure an effectual and permanent supply of my immediate vicinity; and can aid more powerfully in raising contributions for the general designs of the parent institution, than I could by subscribing in London: I prefer the former method to the latter; and as this is a case which does not come within either parochial, pastoral, or episcopal jurisdiction, I must be permitted to follow my own judgment, though it

without any fear of refutation, that it would do much more than the Bible Society does, or can undertake to do; for it would not only disperse the Bible wherever it might be deemed expedient to give it circulation, but would also send with it, what alone can make it effectual to the salvation of mankind, the Ministers and Sacraments of the Christian Church.

^r Does then the Bible Society afford greater privileges to the Members of Auxiliary Societies than to its own Members? Or cannot Mr. F. as easily supply the poor of his own immediate vicinity by sending to the depository in Fleet-street, as by application to the Committee at Hackney?

Quodcunque ostendis mihi sic, incredulus odi.

be, which I deeply regret, at variance with the opinion of *the vestry, the vicar, and the bishop.*

In answer to another paper, entitled; “ Both Sides of the Question,” it is only necessary to remark, that, nearly the whole of its reasoning is founded upon a false assumption; namely, that the British and Foreign Bible-Society seeks to exclude the office of the ministry. This I have denied, and, I trust, disproved^s;—but, knowing how little the opponents of the Institution can really say, with an appearance of truth, against a design so pure and excellent, I cannot be surprised to find them raising up imaginary *heresies*^t, which have no existence, except within their own fancy: The only other objection noticed in “ Both Sides of the Question,” is the union of Churchmen with Dissenters; in promoting the circulation of the Scriptures.—The author appears to have been ashamed of the allusion to this stale and fully-refuted prejudice^v, and there-

^s The attentive reader may perhaps think differently.

^t When Mr. F. discovers the masked buffoon who has thought proper to make the Athanasian Creed the subject of his ridicule; for the purpose, as he no doubt intends, of furthering the interests of the Bible-Society; he will probably admit the *heresies*, which he accuses the objectors to the Institution of raising up, are not quite *imaginary*. Vide App. No. XII.

^v It is intended to include among these stale and fully refuted prejudices, the command of St. Paul, 2 Thess. iii. 6, and his affectionate intreaty, Rom. xvi. 17.?

fore has founded no argument upon it ; and I shall not give to it an importance it does not deserve, by offering observations in answer ; but, by way of advice to the authors of the “ Counter-Address,” and “ Both Sides of the Question,” I would say, in the language of a modern and reverend poet :

“ Shall those, whose narrow souls can scarce embrace
 “ A narrow sect, contracted as themselves ;
 “ Who aim at all, that dare to overstep
 “ The straitened bounds their bigotry prescribes,
 “ Thundering anathemas ; who love to doom
 “ To endless misery their fellow men,
 “ Because, forsooth, in different modes and forms
 “ They worship God*—Shall such be recognised
 “ As HIS disciples, whose benignant heart
 “ With soft compassion melted, and whose love
 “ Far as Creation’s utmost limits flew “.”

* To prevent the intention of this quotation from being perverted, I shall transcribe the amiable author’s own Note.—
 “ It is hoped the reader will not consider these sentiments as favouring the supposed *indifference* of all modes and forms in religion, much less as approving the fashionable cant of modern infidelity, which represents ‘ the votaries of Osiris, Jupiter, Odin, or Veda, as paying homage, though in different forms, to the same God whom Christians adore.’ All that is intended, is to censure the conduct of those who confound things of *minor*, with those of the *first* importance ; and who lay an equal stress on the *circumstantial*s of Christianity, as on the *grand, fundamental principles* which are essential to its existence.”

CHRISTIAN PASTOR, p. 30.

“ On the subject of feeling and liberality, the authors of the “ Counter Address” and “ Both Sides of the Question,”

It was not my intention to have offered any remarks of mine to the consideration of the inhabitants, or I should have made some observations upon a pamphlet, given away at the door of one of the places * of worship, within the Parish, the preface to which is said to have been written by one of the parochial clergy, but I feel myself now called upon to submit the preceding remarks to the good sense of my neighbours, in order to satisfy a wish expressed by many, that the erroneous statements contained in the "Counter-Address," should not be suffered to impose upon those who are not accurately informed upon the subject. And I do not

however aspersed, have little to appeal against. While the latter is made synonymous with laxity, and the former with enthusiasm, there can be no doubt that they would willingly forego their claims to either, and deem the abuse of this Society and its defenders their best panegyric. Mr. F. therefore is welcome to all the advantage he can derive from the poetry he has quoted; and he may be assured that there can be no wish to "pervert its intention." It speaks a language sufficiently intelligible, even without the comment of its author; and may be safely left to the judgment of the reader, who, if he be a sound Churchman, will doubtless appreciate it as it deserves.

* Where this information was obtained, or what place of worship is alluded to, Mr. F. would have done well to specify. If it is meant that the Pamphlet in question was given away under the direction, with the connivance, or even the knowledge of its Editor, at the place of worship where he personally officiates, the assertion is wholly unfounded.

consider that pamphlet of such importance to warrant my delaying the present address, until a full answer could be given to the mass of misrepresentation which its preface conveys. It may, however, be right to state, for the information of the inhabitants, that the paper signed "Candidus," and introduced by the compiler of the pamphlet, has the merit of commenting upon sentiments^y which never

^y The sentiments upon which this paper comments form a part of a speech spoken by Mr. Owen at a Meeting of the Suffolk Auxiliary Bible Society, held at Ipswich, Dec. 10th, 1811. They are to be found in the Suffolk Chronicle of Dec. 14, 1811. It is well known that the speeches of that day were printed under the direction of the leading friends of the cause; who were seen to go into the printing-house repeatedly while the paper was publishing, to superintend and correct the press. Gentlemen of unimpeachable character are ready to bear testimony, that these speeches, as far as they heard them, were correctly reported in that newspaper; direct and positive assurance has been given to the Editor, in a letter from a respectable Clergyman, that the passage in question agrees in substance with what he heard Mr. Owen deliver in the Shire Hall. And another correspondent perfectly remembers the material fact of the document having been alluded to by Mr. O.; and declares that the tendency of the whole of his Second Speech on that day was in strict unison with the sarcastic and boasting language imputed to him by Candidus. These letters, with other documents bearing on the subject, are all in the Editor's possession, and substantiate the fact beyond dispute. He also has it in his power to add, that the printer of the Suffolk Chronicle has been applied to, and that he is positive he gave the Speech in his newspaper as it was delivered. But it is said

were uttered by the person to whom they are ascribed, and were publicly disavowed by that respectable person at the time "Candidus" published his observations. The reader will, therefore, take this as an evidence of the liberality, candour and faithfulness, of "A PRESBYTER OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND," who could republish observations made under such circumstances. Another statement which the preface to the pamphlet contains is, that, "against the last labours of Professor Marsh, the advocates of the Bible-Society have not ventured to oppose even an insinuation."—This statement will be duly appreciated when the reader is informed, that Dr. Marsh has been most fully and conclusively answered^z, (not by the Bible-Society,

that Mr. Owen has publicly disavowed these sentiments. The result of the Editor's enquiries upon this subject is as follows; that Mr. Owen did write a letter complaining that his speech was not accurately given; that this letter was laid before the Committee of the Auxiliary Bible Society at Ipswich, and that this Committee *took no notice of it*. The reader will probably conclude with the Editor that silence, at such a time, and on such a subject, is no inconsiderable evidence in favour of the accuracy of Candidus: and that the liberality, candour, and faithfulness, of the "Presbyter of the Church of England" will not suffer in the estimation of the impartial and unprejudiced from his having republished observations which can be thus substantiated.

^z Before the reader can duly appreciate this statement, he must be in possession of other documents than those which Mr. F. has chosen to lay before him. He ought to know,

the committee of which is better employed,) but by some able advocates, who have said enough in

1st That Mr. Otter's work, alluded to in Mr. F.'s note, does not bear the title he gives it, but is called "a Vindication of Churchmen who become Members of the British and Foreign Bible Society: being an Answer to Dr. Marsh's Pamphlet on that Subject." Mr. F. doubtless had his reasons for the alteration he has made; but such is the fact. 2. Mr. Otter professes only to answer Dr. Marsh's first pamphlet. 3. The Christian Observer for August, 1812, contains no answer of any kind to either of Dr. Marsh's Tracts. 4. The extract from the Eclectic Review, given by Mr. F. in his Appendix, mentions no work which even professes to be an answer to either of the labours of Dr. Marsh. 5. It must be evident to every candid reader of the passage to which Mr. F. refers, that Dr. Marsh's History of the Translations is the work particularly alluded to: and though there may be a trifling inaccuracy of expression, inasmuch as this in fact was the second, and not the last of his labours, though *one* of the last; yet as this inaccuracy does not in the least affect the argument, nor tend in the slightest degree to mislead the reader, who must have been referred by the context to the work, to which his attention was intended to be directed, it is presumed that it will not afford an opportunity for any very grievous charge against the author. To prevent however the possibility of misconception or misrepresentation, it may be stated that it was then *intended* to assert, as it is now again distinctly asserted, that to the facts and arguments contained in the "History of the Translations," by Dr. Marsh, the advocates of the Bible-Society have not ventured to oppose even an insinuation. Nay, further, that the last of them, the Dean of Carlisle, in an advertisement prefixed to his volume, has distinctly given up the point, and perfectly regardless of the stress laid upon it, till it was detected, has declared it one

quality, as well as quantity, to drive from the field all its opponents. For an account of the state of the controversy, I refer the reader to the *ECLECTIC REVIEW**, for the present month; and, in an Appendix to these remarks, I shall extract from that valuable work a small part of the information given to the public upon this subject.

I have only now, in conclusion, to express my hope, that the inhabitants of Hackney will “good-humouredly” allow each other to pursue that line, in reference to the proposed *AUXILIARY BIBLE-SOCIETY*, which they may severally be inclined to prefer; and I cannot take my leave of them better than by affectionately commending to their attention the following sentiments, contained in a congratulatory address from the Society’s corresponding committee in India, only premising that three of the

* See also an admirable work (not mentioned in the Review), entitled “An Examination of Dr. Marsh’s Answer to all the Arguments in Favour of the British and Foreign Bible-Society, by the Rev. William Otter, M.A. F.L.S.” Also the *Christian Observer*, for August, 1812.

of no consequence. It now becomes Mr. F., who has thus stood forward to accuse “a Presbyter of the Church of England,” to defend the accuracy of his own statement, if he can; if not, the conclusion of the Apostle is recommended to his serious consideration. Rom. ii. 1.

parties who subscribed that address were the three heads of the baptist mission before mentioned :—

“ We do most sincerely congratulate the British
 “ and Foreign Bible-Society, on the diffusion of
 “ their spirit in India, as well as their general
 “ success in other parts of the world ; and we do
 “ earnestly join them in beseeching Almighty
 “ God to inspire continually our Christian brethren
 “ of all denominations, with the spirit of truth,
 “ unity, and concord ; and grant that all they who
 “ do confess His Holy Name, may agree in the
 “ truth of His Holy Word, and live in unity and
 “ Godly love.”

J. W. FRESHFIELD.”

9th Dec. 1812.

THE three papers which follow, (page 244)
 the last of which, for reasons sufficiently obvious,
 was dispersed *at night and without a printer's*
name, contain internal evidence, that they are
 Socinian^a contributions to the cause of the Bible

^a The Editor is aware that the term Unitarians is that by
 which the Sect to whose proceedings the ensuing observa-
 tions relate, at present designate themselves, but he cannot

Society : and it is in this point of view, that, contemptible as they are in themselves, they become useful documents ; inasmuch as they are further evidence of the interest which Socinians take in the success of an Institution, professedly established for the dissemination of that faith^b, which

consent to become implicated in giving currency to the insinuation which this their favourite designation conveys, that they only of all the professors of Christ's Religion acknowledge the Unity of the Godhead ; whenever, therefore, he speaks in his own language, their original title (Socinians) is adopted. He begs, however, to apologise to those who adhere to the confession of faith set forth by Socinus for confounding them and another class of their brethren together, who have departed from it in so many important articles, that Leslie says, the former would not own the latter for so much as Christians, Works, Vol. I. p. 218.

^b Lord Teignmouth states the Bible Society "to have the same end in view with the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, the furtherance of the blessings of the Gospel." And though he does not directly state it, it is a necessary implication from his words, that Bishop Porteus was made to believe that the advancement of *religious truth* was its pious design, and that it was by means of this representation that his patronage was obtained *. Mr. Vansittart sets it forth as engaged in the diffusion of Christianity and in the establishment of Christian Faith, and the extension of Christian Charity, and as *having done more towards the accomplishment of these great objects than has been effected in the same space of time in any age since the Apostolic*†" Mr.

* Letter to Dr. Wordsworth, p. 16 and 4.
Marsh and Mr. Coker.

† Letter to Prof.

they contradict and blaspheme in many of its most important articles ; and in the eradication of which they are displaying at this time more active ingenuity than they have done at any former period.

It is well known, that under the specious title of " an improved Version upon the basis of " Archbishop Newcome's Translation," they have put out a garbled edition of the New Testament, accommodated by every species of violence and sophistication to the Socinian hypothesis. To give currency to this version amongst Members of the Church of England, they have had recourse to the artifice of sending it forth under the declared sanction of a Society established amongst themselves for the propagation of Socinianism, but very nearly identified in its designation with the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge^a.

Dealtry pronounces that the Unitarian and the Bible Society are *directly in opposition* to each other *." And the first paper circulated by the Bible Society enumerates, as the evils which it was instituted to correct, " ignorance, superstition, and idolatry," under which latter term, it is presumed, was intended to be included both the *Scriptural* descriptions of that spiritual depravity, as well " the idol in the heart, as this stumbling-block of iniquity set before the face," (i. e.) the worship, not of images only, but also of imaginations.

^a An edition in folio of the Socinian Bible is now pub-

* Vindication, p. 84.

This system of mutilation has been extended to Dr. Watts's Divine Songs, which are now palmed upon the public, reduced to a state of Socinian neutrality, but bearing all the outward semblance of the genuine edition of that manual of early devotion; the same course has been taken with that popular tract Melmoth's Great Importance of a Religious Life; and it is very probable, that the devotional compositions of some eminent Divines of the Church of England are in circulation *unchristianized* in the same manner, as a digested plan for this purpose was published in the Monthly Repository of December, 1809; and *Law's "Serious Call,"* and Bishop *Jeremy Taylor's "Rule of Holy Living and Dying,"* were specified as works from which *selections* might advantageously be made, "unmixed with those sentiments which the Unitarians deem unfounded in the Gospel"^b

lishing in Numbers at Manchester, and is circulated very extensively through many parts of England, being set forth as "recommended by the Society for propagating Christian Knowledge." Ostervald's Practical Observations are stated upon the cover to be among the Illustrations introduced, which being upon the list of the Church Society greatly contributes to the deception.

^b See Nares' Remarks on the version of the New Testament, lately edited by the Unitarians. Introduction, p. 8—11.

Under the designation of "religious conferences," this sect have established in their Meeting Houses a sort of Debating Assembly, at which the mysteries of the Christian faith are all in their turn brought under discussion with that freedom of enquiry, which admits every one to deliver his opinion, and that too in any language, which an unchastised imagination may suggest^c.

^c To what extent this outrage upon Christianity exists the Editor has not the means to ascertain. His statement is founded upon proceedings in the Parish of Hackney, where for some years these conferences have been held once a week during the five winter months. They are, however, so attractive to the young and inconsiderate, who, some for the sake of displaying and exercising their oratorical powers—others from motives of curiosity, attend them frequently in great numbers, and they are obviously so very efficient a means of generating scepticism and unbelief, that there can be little doubt, that wherever there is a Socinian teacher, gifted with the sort of talent requisite for the Moderator of such an Assembly, there a forum similar to that here exhibited will be opened. That the reader may form some idea of the sceptical tendency of these discussions, the paper of questions for the present year is subjoined:

A List of Subjects to be discussed at the Conferences to be holden in the Lecture-room of the New Gravel-pit Meeting-House, Hackney, on the Wednesday Evening during the Winter Season, 1812, 1813.

1812. Dec. 9. *The probable consequences of an universal cir-*

And they are very assiduous in obtaining an

*culatation of the Bible, "without note or
"comment *."*

1812. Dec. 16. *The grounds of the Reformation from Popery, in the 16th century.*
 23. *Whether the Reformation left any of the prevailing corruptions of Christianity unreformed.*
 30. *Characters of the "Man of Sin," 2 Thess. ii. 3, &c.*
1813. Jan. 6. *Whether any part of Christian doctrine be proposed to the belief of mankind as a mystery?*
 13. *The Calvinistic doctrines of election and reprobation.*
 20. *Whether the declaration, Mark xvi. 16. (He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned;) be applicable to men of the present day.*
 27. *The innocency of mental error.*
 Feb. 3. *The Apostles' Creed.*

* Mr. Dealtry professes himself "at a loss to determine" on what grounds the Dean of Bocking "identified" the Unitarian Society, "as "to its nature and object, with the Bible Society;" the former "circulating the Scriptures in an improved version with note and comment;" the other "the common version without them." See *Vindication*, p. 84. Had he attended to the debate upon this introductory question for the year, he would probably have been no longer perplexed in the solution of this problem. The very proposal of it for discussion, by the leader of the Unitarian Society, carries with it a strong presumption, that there is not that incongruity between the two Societies which he imagines—that in their result they are identified, though they arrive at it by a different process, and may have in the persons of many of their members really different views.

influence over the education of children^d, and in

1813. Feb. 10. *The Athanasian Creed.*

17. *Moral Effects of War.*

24. *Scriptural authority for Infant Baptism.*

March 3. *Peculiarities in the doctrine and discipline of the people called Quakers.*

10. *The idea of Christianity, as a reformation, Heb. ix. 10.*

17. *Whether infallibility be claimed by the Prophets, Apostles, or Evangelists?*

24. *Whether the Old Testament reveal the doctrine of a future state of existence?*

31. *Agreement between the Church of Rome and the Established Protestant Churches.*

April 7. *Doctrines common to all Christians.*

14. *Love to Christ on Unitarian Principles.*

21. *Whether any scheme of Church Discipline can be devised, which shall sufficiently discountenance immorality, without infringing upon Christian Liberty?*

28. *Whether the character of God, as revealed in the Scriptures, warrants the expectation of the final happiness of all mankind?*

N.B. *The conference is opened and concluded with singing and Prayer. The Minister presides at the meeting. No subject is adjourned to a second conference. The service begins a quarter of an hour before seven o'clock.*

^d In confirmation of this position, it might be sufficient to exhibit the following advertisement, the production of an old member of the Bible Society, a Vice President of the Uxbridge Auxiliary Society, and President of the Uxbridge Lancastrian School.

devising paradoxes, perplexing only to the infantile understanding, to prejudice them, whilst “weak

EDUCATION GRATIS.

To any of his poorer neighbours and fellow Christians in the parish of Ruislip, who, content with the primitive, patriarchal, prophetic, apostolic name and doctrine of ONE GOD, are little curious to worship or obey HIM under the comparatively modern and unscriptural appellation of Trinity in Unity, Triune Deity, &c. &c. and who may be willing to educate their children in strict and intelligible adherence to this great, leading, fundamental principle of both Revelations, the Jewish and the Christian. It is proposed by Mr. CLARKE,

To clothe and put to school at his own expence, somewhere within the above parish, twenty children of both sexes.

Any parent, who is an inhabitant, may apply for further information on the subject, to Mr. C.

Swakely, Aug. 25, 1812.

Lake, Printer, Uxbridge.

The assiduity of Socinians in the prosecution of this object is further exemplified by what Mr. Nares has remarked upon the use made of the *obituary* of the Monthly Repository. Where an expedient is resorted to for proselyting *school-mistresses* to Socinianism, which shews that the design of inveigling them is ever uppermost in the thoughts of the conductors of that Socinian journal; and that they cannot even register the commonest occurrence, without examining it at all points, to see how it may be put in the way of possibly contributing to the promotion of this design, and then making their representation accordingly. See Nares's Remarks, &c. Introduct. p. 12.

" in faith," against those fundamental verities of the Gospel, the impeachment of which, by "*strifes of words*," and "*oppositions of science falsely so called*," constitutes the prominent department of Socinian Theology^e.

This brief statement of facts, supported by the documents subjoined, puts out of all question what has been alleged above of the Socinians, that so far from entertaining any congeniality of sentiment with the Bible Society in that which is declared

^e The demonstration of this charge is set forth in the three following sophistical papers now in circulation by Mr. Clarke; upon the last of which, as it shews what concert prevails amongst the whole Socinian body, it is important to observe, that it first appeared in the Norwich paper of Jan. 9, 1813, having been carried to the printer by the servant of a Socinian of that city, and inserted without the knowledge of the editor. This introduction was then prefixed to it.

" National School."

" *A friend to the National System of Education wishes to give the following premiums to the boys now educating on that system in this city.*" And it concluded thus: "*One month will be allowed them for the search; when, if the chapters and verses are pointed out in the Norwich paper, together with the names of the lads who found them, the above prizes will immediately be paid to the Secretary of the above Society, to be by him transmitted to them.*"

to be the great object of the institution*, they are

I.

WHETHER OF THE TWAIN!

Search the Scriptures. (Jesus Christ)

To us there is but ONE GOD —the FATHER. (St. Paul)

GOD is a Spirit. (Jesus Christ)

The true worshippers shall worship THE FATHER. (Jesus Christ)

When ye pray, say, OUR FATHER. (Id.)

THE ONLY TRUE GOD, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent. (Id.)

My Father is greater than I. (Id.)

The SON can do nothing of himself. (Id.)

Search the Liturgy, the Athanasian Creed, the Catechism, and the Thirty-nine Articles.

To us there is GOD the FATHER, GOD the SON, and GOD the HOLY GHOST.

GOD is (or) are, Three Persons in One Substance.

The TRINITY (Threeness) in UNITY (Oneness) and the UNITY in TRINITY is to be worshipped.

When ye pray, say, holy, blessed, and glorious TRINITY.

So likewise the SON is GOD.

He is equal, neither greater nor less.

The SON is himself Almighty.

Lake, Printer, Uxbridge.

II.

In every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. Phil. iv. 6.

* See note b, p. 203.

possessed with a bitter enmity, and are carrying on a subtle and systematical hostility against it.

It is this which gives importance to the following papers; for the inference is not to be evaded, that

Unto

The God of our Lord Jesus Christ. Eph. i. 17.

The only true God. John xvii. 3.

The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. xv. 6.

Our Father. Matt. vi. 9. Phil. iv. 20. Gal. i. 5.

The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our Father, his God and our God. John xx. 17.

The one God the Father. 1 Cor. viii. 6.

God even the Father. 1 Cor. xv. 24. Col. i. 2. 12.

In the name of Jesus Christ. John xvi. 23. Matt. xviii. 20. Eph. v. 20.

Through him. (Jesus Christ). Rom. i. 8. vii. 25. Eph. ii. 18.

By him. Col. iii. 17.

I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth. (Jesus Christ)

I will pray the Father. (Jesus Christ)

When ye (my Disciples) pray, say, Our Father. (Jesus Christ)

The true worshippers shall worship the Father. (Jesus Christ)

Not

God the Son.

Not

God the Holy Ghost.

Not

Holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity.

(Expressions not to be found in the Scriptures.)

In that day ye shall ask me nothing. (Jesus Christ)

Ask the Father. (Jesus Christ)

There is no printer's name to this paper.

a Sect which is striking daily, with measured blows, at the very vitals of Christianity, and which, because the authorized version of the Scriptures stood in its way, has pared it down to its own standard, and has ventured to publish it thus mutilated, as an improved transcript of the original, would have been induced by no consideration to make common cause with the Bible Society, if it had not perceived in the *secret tendencies* of that Institution something which would conduce rather to the advancement of Socinianism than to the general dissemination of pure and perfect Christianity, the splendid but delusive object which the Bible Society professes exclusively to prosecute,

III.

EASTCOT.

Scriptural School.

FIVE GUINEAS REWARD WILL BE DISTRIBUTED AS BELOW :

To the child who first points out the chapter and verse in the Bible, in which is found the phrase, GOD the SON, TWO GUINEAS.

To the child who first points out the chapter and verse in the Bible, in which is found the phrase, GOD the HOLY GHOST, TWO GUINEAS.

To the child who first points out the chapter and verse in the Bible, in which is found the word—TRINITY, ONE GUINEA.

N.B. The PARENTS and FRIENDS of the children are permitted to assist them in the search.

Lake, Printer, Uxbridge.

and which has fascinated so many sincerely religious men.

If, however, these papers were solitary instances of Socinian co-operation, to draw an inference from them involving the whole Sect would be a very inconclusive deduction; as they were probably all the effusions of an individual. But whoever will take the pains to enquire into the composition of Auxiliary Societies, will find that *Socinians in general*, especially the *teachers* of the sect, have associated themselves with them, and that there are several instances, at constituent and anniversary meetings, of their taking a lively interest in the proceedings, and distinguishing themselves in the declamation of the day.

In this parish a gentleman of that persuasion bore so prominent a part in the Provisional Committee, that he acted as its representative at the General Meeting, and is in fact the only Member of that self-constituted body, of whom any official record has appeared.

At Newcastle-upon-Tyne^f, at Huntingdon^g,

^f At Newcastle-upon-Tyne, according to the statement in 6th Report of the Bible Society, the joint Secretary, with the Rev. John Smith, Vicar, is Mr. William Turner, the teacher of the Socinian Meeting in Hanover-square in that town.

This gentleman, in a note to a Sermon preached at York, and dedicated to the students of a seminary under the direction of Mr. Well-beloved, a Socinian teacher in that city, and a Member of the Auxiliary Bible Society there, refers them to the Improved Version, and thus not merely approves it himself, but recommends it to young students as a book of authority. He is moreover engaged (as appears by an advertisement subjoined to another sermon of his just published) in the Socinianizing of Dr. Watts's Psalms, together with those of Addison, Merrick, &c. and is about to put out Offices for Public and Family Devotion, "for the accommodation," as he states, "of small associations of Unitarian Christians, " who may not be able as yet to maintain a regular Minister, " or of families who may reside or be occasionally situated " at a distance from any place where worship is addressed " to the one God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." This may be considered as *Socinianism made Easy*, and certainly as an unquestionable recommendation of Mr. Turner to the most confidential situation amongst his own connections; but on what principle it can warrant his appointment to the joint secretaryship of the Newcastle Bible Society, where his talent for *improving Versions* is so much out of place, the Editor must refer it to those better informed upon the subject to explain.

§ From reading the first Annual Report of the Huntingdon Auxiliary Bible Society, no suspicion would be excited in the mind of any one unacquainted with the persons who made themselves prominent on that occasion, that there were substantial grounds for alledging that association as an instance in point. It is nevertheless true, that amongst the speakers a Socinian of no small notoriety appears, who in connection with a powerful body of men of his own persuasion in that part of the world, is uniform in the support of every institution which can weaken the interests of the Church. This whole fraternity

at Norwich^h, and at Chesterⁱ, Socinians have made themselves very conspicuous. At Uxbridge Mr. Clarke of Swakely House, the dispenser of those most insidious libels upon our Holy Faith which have been exhibited above, stands enrolled among the Vice Presidents, and *makes the Bibles which he receives from the Bible Society the vehicles of their circulation*^k, and it is from viewing the following papers in connection with these

came forward in aid of the Huntingdon Auxiliary Society, and by the hasty joy with which they flocked to its standard betrayed their conviction that it would be of infinite use in the cause of mischief.

^h See evidence of Socinian co-operation at Norwich, p. 221.

ⁱ See the speech of Mr. J. Lyons at the Chester Auxiliary Meeting described as "Unitarian Minister of that City," in the Chester Courant of Nov. 24, 1812. Of this Auxiliary Society all the Socinian inhabitants are members. At Ipswich, among the persons who convened the Constituent Meeting, Socinians appear, and the Committee is not without them. At Bath there is a Socinian upon the Committee, and all the Socinian teachers of the city are members of the Society: in short, from the enquiries which have been made, the Editor has reason to believe that wherever Auxiliary Societies have been formed, Socinians in general have become associates.

^k Just as these sheets were going to press, the Editor obtained the following important statement of a proceeding at the Annual Meeting of the Uxbridge Auxiliary Bible Society, held April 23d. Mr. Hodgson, the zealous and respectable Rector of St. George's, Hanover Square, having been induced to become a Vice-President of this Auxiliary Bible Society, was applied to by a friend for information whether the Mr. Clarke

simultaneous exertions of Socinians in places far remote from each other, that their *concerted* support of the Auxiliary system is inferred.

whose name appeared associated with his in the list of Vice-Presidents of that Institution, was the circulator of the Socinian papers exhibited above. With a manliness which does the highest honour to his character, he resolved to authenticate this fact at the fountain head. Accordingly he attended the Committee, which sat previous to the General Meeting, and finding Mr. Clarke there, he put the question directly to him, whether what his friend had heard was true. Mr. C. replied that he pleaded guilty to the whole charge, if guilt it could be called: Upon this open avowal, Mr. Hodgson declared that it was totally impossible for himself and Mr. Clarke to remain together in the same Society, and therefore that unless Mr. C. should think proper to resign, he should deliver in his own resignation, which declaration, upon Mr. Clarke's signifying his intention to retain his situation, he carried immediately into effect.

Before however Mr. Hodgson quitted the room, Mr. Owen entered it, and upon Mr. Hodgson's telling him what had occurred, his first observation was, that it was expressly the principle of the Bible Society to admit all descriptions of persons, let their religious opinions be what they might *;

* At the Auxiliary Meeting at Bath, Mr. Owen is not quite so comprehensive in his charity. He there limits "the connection and co-operation which the Members and Ministers of the Church are *compotent* to maintain to all who in every place *call on the Redeemer as their Lord and Saviour*," and he intimates that they would "yield to a *base compromise*," were they to overstep this limitation. See Bath Auxiliary Report, p. 7, 8.

This is stated in the Prologue to the drama of the day. In the Epilogue (which, from many specimens, appears to be assigned also by

That Socinians should reason and act in this manner only shews that they are wise in their generation. If those who adore that "great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh," and who count it their joy, their glory, and their confidence that they "are purchased with his own blood," will give to men, who do continual despight unto these most precious doctrines of the

that for instance, he saw nothing adverse to that principle in admitting a Jew or a Mahometan to be members of the Institution, adding that some *Jews* were at that time members of it. But upon being pressed rather more home upon the subject, and questioned by Mr. H. whether after the avowal made by Mr. Clarke, a conscientious member of the Church of England could continue to act with him in the dissemination of the Bible as Co-Vice President of the same body, he was rather put to a non plus. His adroitness however in parrying inquiries which it is inconvenient to meet openly either with a direct affirmation or denial, quickly suggested the following casuistical distinction, which long practised as Mr. Owen must have been in the splitting of hairs in order to preserve the semblance of consistency at Auxiliary Meetings could scarcely have been

systematic arrangement always to this chief performer) his liberality dilates itself, and by a definition of schism which is compleatly original and remarkably ingenious, he cancels his former limitation by which Socinians are excluded, and represents an indefinite "co-operation with Separatists in the circulation of the Bible" as bound upon Churchmen in order to preserve them from the guilt "of authorising *causeless separation* in some of its modifications and degrees, and from becoming themselves Schismatics and Dissenters." Bath Report, p. 42.

Gospel, the right hand of fellowship, 'tis their policy to receive it: for the tendency of our nature is towards corruption no less in the spirit than in the flesh, and, by a moral necessity, evil communications will corrupt good *principles* as well as good manners, as a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. The Sacred Volume, so much venerated in the abstract by the Bible Society, most peremptorily determines this; but the conductors of that Institution, engaged in the magnificent scheme of converting the whole world, are too sublimely occupied to descend to the domestic detail of its practical determinations.

conceived, till demonstrated by the event, within the compass even of his acumen to excogitate.

“ If the avowal,” he replied, “ had been *voluntary*, there might have been some ground for objection, but that as it was *drawn out by a question*, which he thought at that *time* and *place an indelicate one*, he did not see any force in Mr. Hodgson’s conclusion.” Mr. Hodgson, not gifted with this acute discrimination of intellect, could not conceive that delicacy had any thing to do in *such* a case: he thought he had a right to know whether or not he was acting with a person holding Socinian principles, and that, having ascertained the fact, he ought not to act with him any longer. This he stated in reply to Mr. Owen, and then left the room, assailed by the accusations of several persons present, particularly of a Dissenting Minister, of having excited *discord* in a Society which had hitherto been peaceably conducted.

Mr. Dealtry¹ indeed, its laureate advocate, has undertaken its vindication against the charge here preferred : he felt so strongly how derogatory to its religious character it was to labour under the imputation of extending its comprehension to a Sect, which no description of Christians ever before deemed it consistent with the reverence due to their Divine Master to affiliate with themselves in any kind of religious association, that he is quite indignant with the Dean of Bocking and “ his brethren,” whom he stiles “ the authors of this fiction,” for having, as he alledges, devised and propagated so injurious a calumny ; and he repels it by a declaration that “ having made diligent inquiry,” so far from finding Socinians entered into the Society to any great amount, “ he heard “ only of one or two.”

But demonstration of the inaccuracy of this too inconsiderately hazarded assertion has been already produced, and it is about to be shewn that the conciliatory spirit of the Society with respect to Socinians is carried far beyond the mere tacit acquiescence in their admission, even to the *inviting them to associate*, to the *smoothing down every obstacle* to their fraternization ;

¹ See Vindication of British and Foreign Bible Society, p. 83.

may to the eulogising them “*for making sacrifices*” stated to be “*perhaps not trivial*” in so far conceding their own religious scruples as *to take part in the dissemination of the Scriptures according to the authorized version*: and this eulogy is passed upon them, not by an ordinary Member of the Society from whom it can disengage itself by disclaiming all responsibility for his opinions; but *by one of the Legates a latere of the parent Institution*, and that too in his *Legatine capacity*, assisting, *by special delegation, at the encœnia* of a newly organized dependency, and in his *official declamation*, brought with him ready prepared for the occasion ^m.

And this conciliatory demeanour towards Socinians seems spreading itself rapidly and growing into a bye law of the Bible Society; for at the last Anniversary of the Norwich Auxiliary Society, (in which, in the motley group of its committee-men at least two persons of this persuasion appear) an intimation having transpired that a Member in

^m Extract from the speech of Mr. Hughes at Yarmouth, Oct. 29, 1812. “Here the Catholic had united with the Protestant, the Churchman with the Dissenter, the Presbyterian with the Calvinist, and the Methodist with the Member of the Society of Friends. But why do I apply this term to a particular sect? we are all friends; all differ-

attendance was come prepared to express that honest abhorrence of the envenomed blasphemies of Socinianism which is inseparable from genuine Christian feeling in the heart of man; solicitations were made to him to abstain from all such animadversions, as persons, it was urged, of that persuasion would be present, and *it might destroy the unanimity of the day*. He was not however to be induced to compromise his jealousy for the honour of his Lord and Master. The constraining love of Christ prevailed over temporising suggestions, he carried his pious purpose into effect, and the apprehended altercation ensued, as must be the case continually, in an assembly, so constituted, till the Bible Society has had its perfect work, and has either driven those, who love the

ence of opinion is put out of question, and the British and Foreign Bible Society is indeed a Society of Friends. CREEDS WERE NOT THOUGHT OF, FOR EACH GAVE UP A LESSER FOR A GREATER GOOD. *A large portion* of the members of one religious sect had made a *sacrifice* which was perhaps *not trivial*, they believed that many errors of translation were to be found in the authorized version of the Scriptures, and had accordingly published a version of their own; but here they had given up that particular opinion, and had come forward as advocates for the distribution of that translation of the Bible in which they believed some errors were to be found." See Report of Proceedings at Great Yarmouth, at the formation of a Branch Society, p. 15, 16.

truth, and are resolved under grace to hold fast the profession of it to the last extremity, "to the dens and caves of the earth," or has offered them up as victims at the altar of the idol of these last times—INDIFFERENCE TO EVERY RELIGIOUS OPINION.

In the same spirit have the Committee of the Hackney Auxiliary Society drawn up their report of the speeches delivered on the day of their inauguration; for the harmony of the Constituent Meeting here sustained something approaching to a similar interruption to that just stated to have taken place at Norwich. One of the speakers, to whom was assigned the part of proposing the Committee, could not repress his abhorrence of Socinianism, nor restrain himself from protesting as far as he was concerned, against giving the right hand of fellowship to its professors, but he proclaimed to the whole assembly that "if there was a Socinian in the room, his faith differed from the faith of that person as far as East from West ---as Earth from Heaven." It has not come to the Editor's knowledge, that any attempts were previously made to dissuade the gentleman from violating the concordat of the Institution, as was done in the former instance: indeed the contradiction into which he was betrayed of proposing as Members of the Committee a list of per-

sons among whom Socinians appear, and in the same breath renouncing all communion with men of that irreligious persuasion, makes it evident that there could have been no *previous explanation* between him and his associates. But as the Editor has received information on which he can rely, that though this attack upon Socinianism produced no further altercation at the Meeting than the being repelled by a profession of Socinian unbelief; yet that afterwards violent symptoms appeared of the offence which it had given; insomuch that the awkward circumstance of a rupture in this newly solemnized confederation was apprehended: and as this rupture has not taken place, at the same time that all reference to the Socinians is suppressed in the speech in question, as printed by authority, there is strong circumstantial evidence that a *subsequent compromise* was made, and the legitimate inference is, that the retraction of the offensive passage was the conciliatory expedient employed to effect the pacificationⁿ.

ⁿ The conductor of the Leicester paper, after promising for two successive weeks an account of the proceedings of the Anniversary Meeting of the Auxiliary Bible Society of that town, which took place on the 13th of April last, states in the following paper, that "he understands it to be the wish of the gentlemen who delivered their sentiments on that occasion, that the speeches should *not* now appear."

The influence then which the Bible Society is likely to have upon the Christian faith is now pretty

Amongst these sentiments, as the Editor has been informed on good authority, was delivered a remonstrance with the Socinian Members of the Society, (the Socinian Teacher being present,) for having so ill requited the conciliatory spirit manifested by their brethren of other denominations, in giving them the right hand of fellowship, as to have lent no co-operation in circulating the Authorised Version of the Scriptures, and to have continued circulating their own "Improved Version" since their fraternization. This parallelism to the incident stated above as having taken place at Hackney, throws some light upon the suppression of this burst of eloquence; for these little interruptions of harmony spoil the stage effect, and break one of the most potent spells of the confederation: and therefore that paramount concern, its welfare and support, requires that they should be kept as much as possible from public view.

It is known to the Editor that some Members of other Auxiliary Societies of high Evangelical pretensions partake in the well-founded scruples which displayed themselves at Leicester, and are by no means at rest in their consciences with respect to their Socinian alliance. They feel themselves in an awkward dilemma, and there can be no doubt that the aforesaid remonstrants feel the same; indeed that the feeling prevails generally amongst this class of the associates: for what can be more preposterous than for men who speak in so high a tone respecting doctrine, and set themselves forth as the only "true Churchmen," to associate themselves, for Christian purposes, with those who deny almost every article of the *Christian* faith; and have literally mutilated the sacred text, because they can neither resist the force, nor sophisticate the clearness of the

well ascertained; for till its institution Socinians were as the Ishmaelites of the Christian dispensation: they excommunicated as *idolaters* all professors of Christianity but themselves, and every other denomination of Christians excommunicated them as “blasphemers of that worthy name “whereby we all are called,” as “enemies of the “cross of Christ,” as “denying the Son, and “therefore not having the Father:” nay, with such general abhorrence was this pestilent heresy contemplated, that it stands proscribed, not merely by Ecclesiastical Law, but by Civil Legislative authority, and by successive Royal Proclamations°.

evidence, with which it witnesses against them. But they are so committed to the principle of their association that they cannot disengage themselves from it; neither can they set bounds to its operation. They have held it up as “the great Diana” which is to concentrate “the worship “of all the world,” and they must admit and retain all comers “without violating,” as Mr. Lancaster has happily expressed it, “the *sanctuary* of any man’s private religious “opinions.” Thus it is that, pinned down as it were to a stake, they are baited by conscience and expediency, and as one or the other of these Philistines is upon them, they either disclose their disquietude in the league which they have formed, or make unworthy compromises to prevent its being broken.

° Socinians are excommunicate ipso facto by the 5th and 6th Canons of the Church of England. They are specifically excluded from the benefits of the Toleration Act.

But now this proscription is in effect superseded, for in the Bible Society those who in the Unity of the Godhead worship the Son, and the Holy Ghost, equally with the Father, and those who degrade the Son to a level with themselves, and the Holy Ghost to a mere quality or attribute, mix indis-

Their opinions are pronounced "blasphemous and impious" in a subsequent Act of Parliament passed expressly against them, "effectually to suppress (to adopt its own phraseology) the *detestable crimes* of avowing and publishing "them." Whilst this sheet is printing off, an attempt is making to procure the repeal of the above statutes. What will be the result, considering the times we live in, it is impossible to calculate; but whatever it may be, the spirit of the party is marked by the application; for there is perhaps scarcely another instance upon record of Parliament being moved to repeal statutes against which no instances of actual grievance could be alledged. Nor surely amongst Socinians can there be many who, except under circumstances of peculiar oppression, could bring themselves to petition *specifically* for the abrogation of a law, which, though "the denial of the Trinity" formed the subject of its concluding prohibition, set forth "*the railing upon and cursing God*" as the prominent offence against which it was enacted. Yet in the Bill of Repeal, as framed by its authors, and as presented to the House of Commons, and printed by its order of June 15th, an Act with the above title exhibited at full length is inserted. And this Act moreover, not cognizable in any part of the United Kingdom, except in Scotland, and there never put in force but in a single instance, and that 117 years ago; so that it is completely obsolete.

criminated together, and the effect, as Mr. Freshfield states it, is that "having a common object they pursue it, and become familiarly acquainted with each other, and that jealousy essential to preserve the full difference and distinction is softened down into indifference and passes away; or, in other words, is found to proceed from *mutual ignorance*, and not to be warranted by *actual experience*, and the prejudice dies a natural death^p." This is the admission of a founder and most zealous advocate of the Bible Society, who both at Hackney and at Huntingdon has stood prominently forward in the formation of Auxiliary Societies in concert *with avowed Socinians*: and when applied to that particular class of associates, it amounts to this: that the standard of the Christian faith, within the limits of the Institution, is lowered down to the Nadir point of Socinian neutrality. For the papers above produced (the most blasphemous of which are publicly circulated by a Vice President of one of the Auxiliary branches of the Bible Society) demonstrate that the "natural death" of pre-existing "prejudices" has not been brought about by a renunciation of the offensive dogmas which excited them, or even by mutual concessions, but by the tacit acquiescence of that portion of the confederacy,

^p See preceding correspondence, p. 7.

who are sound *in this article* of the faith, with those who have so far departed from it, that they stand upon the very verge of infidelity.

But though this prostration of Christian principle has the force of law only within the limits of the Bible Society, its evil influence extends much further; for the members of that Institution set themselves forth, and are contemplated far and wide, as one and indivisible, as a new Apostolate raised up in these last days for the universal propagation of the Gospel. And the necessary impression which this conceit carries with it is, that they must hold in common the substance of Christianity; the points of difference among them being only those of doubtful disputation, or its “immaterial forms;” upon which, in that enlargement of mind which free inquiry has at length produced, they have agreed that a general silence shall be observed, that so they may prosecute with undistracted energy their stupendous design, and may present Christianity to the world so simplified and so accommodating, that “it shall no longer contradict the apprehension, the experience, and the reasoning of mankind;” and shall thus secure for itself that “universal reception” which “contenders for Creeds”¹ have so long laboured

¹ See Dr. Paley’s Moral Philosophy, Dedication. There is strong ground to hope, from Dr. Paley’s posthumous Vo-

to effectuate only to their own discomfiture and confusion.

And upon this principle its language becomes intelligible when it speaks of comprehending within itself "the whole family of man;" for ever since the dispersion of Babel the propensity to atchieve the enterprise which was then so signally defeated has continually manifested itself, not merely in projects for universal empire, but in projects also for the consolidation of mankind in one generalised system of religion.

To refer only to occurrences within the Chris-

lume of Sermons, that he lived to be convinced of the baneful tendency of this observation, as in that volume he has not merely assumed in a general way the character above condemned, but has attached it to himself in all its controverted particulars; having *contended for many of the leading articles of the Creed*, in separate discourses appropriate to each, and having enforced, with all the energy of his powerful mind, their necessity to Salvation. It is due to the memory of Dr. Paley to keep alive the recollection, that his System of Ethics was his earliest production: and it is further no more than justice to him, that these his *Υπερβαλόντες* should be subjoined as an appendix to it, as his own antidote to that religious indifference which its principles will of necessity generate in all who imbibe them; and which it is greatly to be feared, that during the last twenty-eight years it has most extensively diffused.

tian era, this was the project of the Eastern Antichrist, whose counterfeit revelations therefore comprise almost every heterodox opinion to be met with amongst the antient heretics. The Western Antichrist, that mother of abominations, adopted a similar policy; she erected into religious orders the devotees to new imaginations as they arose, she bestowed upon them honours and emoluments, and incorporated them into her own body; and thus invigorated herself by those very breaches of unity, the natural tendency of which was to her own dismemberment and decay. The Bible Society is a refinement upon these expedients; it has set forth the word of God as a universal language; which at once expresses the sentiments of all those who profess to derive out of it their religious systems; and therefore as a common document which they may all adopt as the basis of a general confederation, in virtue of which, as Mr. Thorpe, the Bristol orator, expresses it, “the heat of controversy” being extinguished, and “the shock of parties, and the collision of argument” set at rest for ever, *all shall henceforth “meet as FELLOW-CITIZENS OF THE HEAVENLY JERUSALEM.”*

And they are far advanced towards the consum-

* See proceedings at the second Anniversary Meeting of the Bristol Auxiliary Bible Society, p. 22.

mation of this splendid enterprise ; for in giving the right hand of fellowship to Socinians they have virtually given it to the votaries of Mahomet, the Socinians having long ago recognised them as their “ fellow champions” in religion, and as symbolizing much more closely with themselves than their new associates, who will be found traduced by them as “ idolizing Christians^{*}.” And independently of this virtual admission, according to Whitaker, the Mahometans have a claim of preference to the Socinians as being the better Christians of the two, for he observes, that their Prophet, “ weak and “ wicked as he was, never ventured out into the “ high blasphemies of Socinianism, but was merely “ an Arian, and can be justly claimed only by “ Arians as their confederate[†].” And as he inculcates upon his followers the highest reverence for the Scriptures, and merely put forth the Koran for the same reason that the Socinians have published their Improved Version, because there were some passages in Holy Writ which the Christian expositors of it would obtrude upon public notice, and would not suffer him to explain away ; there

* See Socinian epistle to Ameth Ben Ameth, ambassador from the Emperor of Morocco to Charles II. Leslie’s works, vol. i. p. 207. the original of which is still among the MSS. in the Lambeth Library.

† Whitaker’s Hist. of Arianism, p. 400. Note.

can be little doubt that whenever Mr. Thorpe's representation, which is equally applicable to new gospels as to "new translations," shall be made to the Mahometans, they will imbibe that spirit of conciliation for which the Socinians have been officially panegyriized by Mr. Hughes, and will cheerfully make that "not trivial sacrifice" (in his estimation) "of coming forward as advocates for the distribution of that" authorised transcript of the sacred records, "in which they believe many interpolations are to be found;" as it is most obvious that all grounds of Mahometan, equally with those of Socinian jealousy respecting it, are completely removed "by that simple principle of the Bible Society," which throws it open indifferently to all parties in religion, and guarantees to each of them *the undisturbed distortion of it* according to their own conceits, and thus makes it a compleat substitute for every legend or improved translation which the New Lights of different ages have "issued" or shall hereafter put forth conformable to their "several creeds" to support their respective systems by the semblance of divine authority".

▪ The Editor was not aware that what he has here inferred, was an admitted principle of the Bible Society, till Mr. Owen's declaration at Uxbridge was reported to him. On that gentleman's authority it is now put out of all question, that not Mahometans only, but even Jews are qualified for

But to complete the comprehension, the Deist and the Infidel must be introduced, and the afore-said Mr. Thorpe has specifically invited them to associate, and has set forth the Bible Society as so congenial in its proceedings with both their views that consistency requires their co-operation. "It may probably appear, (he says,) paradoxical, it is nevertheless a truth, that the Deist, if a man of sense and humanity, in order to act consistently with his own sentiments, ought to take part in the distribution of the Scriptures," and his reason is this, that "Deism is a tare which flourishes only in the field where the seeds of Christianity have

becoming its members, nay, that some of the latter are enrolled. Papists are also stated by Mr. Hughes to form a part of the confederacy; but from what has recently transpired, it appears that they are not disposed, (as Mr. Lefroy words it) to "advance that harmony and good understanding" to a reciprocity of fraternization. Those acquainted with our annals will recollect, that in former times they assumed the garb, and became the most zealous partizans of the Puritans, even to the enlisting themselves in great numbers in the Parliament Army. The Church of England is the great Bulwark of the Reformation. This is the first article of their political creed, and they will engage even with Heretics, and in violation of their own subordinate principles, in any project which has the least tendency to overturn it; but still their ruthless enmity against Heretics remains as unrelenting as ever, and the object ultimately aimed at by every measure which they adopt, is their extermination. See *Foxes and Firebrands*, or a specimen of the danger and *harmony* of Popery and Separation, 8vo. 1682.

“ previously been sown. Hence, (he proceeds) a
 “ sensible Deist, conscious of the insufficiency of
 “ philosophy to promote his designs, must be a
 “ friend to the spreading of the Gospel in Pagan
 “ nations. Idolatry with its sanguinary rites being
 “ overthrown, the lurid gloom of superstition dis-
 “ persed, and the notion of the *one God* generally
 “ established, then is the time for the Deist with
 “ his false philosophy to work, persuading man-
 “ kind that his knowledge is the offspring of *nature*
 “ alone, and that revelation is unnecessary.”

The reader will probably feel himself in a strait which most to admire, Mr. Thorpe's paradox, or his solution of it, so creditable to the Society whose cause he undertakes to advocate, which arrogating to itself the office of preaching the Gospel to the world, *not only invites the open enemies* of that Gospel *to come into its bosom* and to assist in the work ; but holds out to them *the facilities which it generates for carrying on their hostility, and the complacency with which it contemplates their attacks*, as inducements to accept the invitation.

But the finishing stroke of Mr. Thorpe's liberalized ingenuity remains to be exhibited.

Servetur ad inum

Qualis ab incepto processerit, et sibi constet

is his motto : and so, boldly pushing his principles

to their necessary but rather staggering ultimatum ;
 “ Thus *Infidelity* (he proceeds) may look favor-
 “ ably on *the dispersion of the Bible*, hoping there-
 “ by that *its interests will be eventually promoted*
 “ by introducing THE GOLDEN AGE OF REASON
 “ THE MILLENNIUM OF INFIDELS ”.

This language speaks for itself. It sets forth the views of the Bible Society so distinctly, that no comment upon it can heighten its effect, except it be to inform the reader, that Dr. Francis Randolph, late of Laura Chapel, Bath, who presided on the occasion, with an exquisite *locality* of expression, closed the proceedings of the day, in a speech full of eulogy “ *on this partnership of love,*
 “ *this great and growing merchandise of human*
 “ *happiness :*” and that the Parent Society has given its sanction to Mr. Thorpe’s representation by the adoption of his speech amongst the specimens of Auxiliary eloquence, furnished at its repository as models for inexperienced orators.

The Editor is aware that the papers which follow, are too contemptible for the consequence apparently attached to them by this introduction. In themselves they really are below contempt. Their

* See proceedings of the second Anniversary Meeting of the Bristol Auxiliary Society, p. 23, 24.

only importance arises from the corroborating testimony which they bear to the lively interest taken by Socinians in the success of the Bible Society, and to the sensibility excited in them by any opposition to its designs. This it seemed desirable to the Editor to appreciate, and to trace to its final results, and therefore he took the occasion which the three following papers gave him to enter into this investigation.

And here he had concluded these preliminary observations, when the correspondence relative to the Roman Catholic Bible Society * came into his hands, and disclosed the advantage which the Papists are taking of this clamour of Popery, raised by the advocates of the British and Foreign Bible Society to drown the voices of those Members of the Church of England who are endeavouring to expose their puritanical encroachments upon the principles of the Reformation.

Mr. Dealtry introduced into the Bible Society controversy this unworthy substitute for argumentative refutation; by republishing amongst his authorities for the several charges alledged in his "Vindication", &c." a pasquinade, under the

* Correspondence on the formation, objects, and plan of the Roman Catholic Bible Society, &c. 8vo. 1813.

† Vindication of the British and Foreign Bible Society, in

fictitious name of Peter O'Leary, which first appeared in an early number of the *Christian Observer*, and conveyed an insinuation of Popery against a respectable Divine who first impeached the principle of his favorite institution, for inculcating in a tract admitted upon the list of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, the observance of a Christian obligation, enjoined in the very Act of Uniformity, the principal enactment of the Legislature of this kingdom for the establishment of the Reformed Religion.

It is curious to observe the association which is thus formed between Mr. Dealtry, Chaplain to a Protestant Bishop, the anonymous Socinian, whose papers are to follow, and Mr. Gandolphy, a real Romanist; the two former insidiously introducing vulnerable points into the English Reformation, and the latter taking advantage of the treachery,

a Letter addressed to the Rev. Dr. Wordsworth. See Appendix to ditto, K.

In republishing Peter O'Leary's Letter, it would have been but ingenuous to have annexed to it the observations which *even the Editor of the Christian Observer* could not refrain from making upon it, when first introducing it to public notice; but these expose its fictitious character, and therefore its unfitness for the place given it amongst a selection of extracts, alledged as evidence, from the writings of Archbishop Synge, Tillotson, and Secker, and moreover contain a very powerful antidote to the false principles which it was reproduced to insinuate.

and then, in the haughty tone of a victorious assailant, boasting of his "success in subverting the "grand and fundamental principle of Protestantism:" and glorying over "the Reformers" indiscriminately, as having "run mad with the Bible "fever²."

But there is not even novelty in this exploit; for the same occasion was given by the Puritans in the reign of James I. and the same advantage was taken by the Papists of those days; who, in a work entitled "A Gag for the New Gospel," made the same boast which Mr. Gandolphy has so confidently repeated: but Bishop Montague^a stepped forth, and in the name of the Church of England disclaimed all but eight or nine out of forty-seven propositions, upon the heretical pravity of which the overthrow of the English Reformation was assumed^b; and it is remarkable, that the second of them, of which the Bishop distinctly pro-

² See Extracts from a Defence of the ancient Catholic Faith, by the Rev. P. Gandolphy, selected by Editors of Correspondence on formation, objects, and plan of Roman Catholic Bible Society, p. 89.

^a Of the state of things at the period here referred to, so coincident with our existing circumstances, an interesting account will be found in the address to the reader, prefixed to Dr. Heylin's *Theologia Veterum*.

^b Answer to the late Gagger of Protestants. 4to. 1624. Address to Reader.

nounces "the Church of England hath no such
 " faith as this," is that which the advocates of
 the Bible Society are now endeavouring to fasten
 upon her again, and that moreover on account of
 the display of his prowess upon which, the newly-
 raised-up Champion of Popery so exults in his
 achievement.

Bishop Montague's representation of the case,
 and of his proceeding in it, is to this effect: that
 " whereas the Puritans were wont to be shrouded
 " under the covert of the Church of England, and
 " to vent, publish, and tender their many idle
 " dreams, fancies, and furies into the world, un-
 " der pretext of the doctrine of our Church, and
 " our opposites of the Romish side did accordingly
 " charge our Church with them, he, out of
 " just indignation of that open wrong and injury
 " done unto his Mother—disbanded them from their
 " shelter, took them off from colluding under
 " the Church's protection, and sent them to
 " their own homes, to shrowd there if they could,
 " and to answer for themselves, and likewise as-
 " serted the Church unto her own true tenets,
 " natural and proper unto that doctrine which is

c Ibid. p. 13. The position thus renounced in behalf of the
 Church of England, is "that in matters of Faith, we must not
 " rely upon the judgment of the Church and of her Pastors,
 " but only upon the Written Word."

“ publicly determined and authorised in her authentic records^d. ”

The same course must be again pursued, and whilst the xxth and xxxivth Articles remain in our Confession, as well as the vith, it will be quite sufficient to refer to them upon the point in question, to put both false brethren and open enemies to silence, for though the vith Article most consistently with primitive doctrine justifies the position, that “ the Bible, and the Bible only, is ” so far “ the Religion of Protestants, ” “ that whatsoever is “ not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is “ not to be required of any man that it should be “ believed as an article of Faith ; ” yet the xxth Article declares the Church to be “ the keeper and “ the expounder of Holy Writ, and to have authority in controversies of Faith ; ” and the xxxivth pronounces it invested with authority to inflict censures on those who offend in these particulars “ against its common order ; ” nay, declares it to be its duty so to do, and that for this reason, which, as specially deserving of attention, Dr. Jackson has singled out from those specified in the Article, “ lest their impunity should minister offence to weak brethren, it being (in his estimation) impossible to give greater offence to the

^d Montague's *Appello Cæsarem*, 4to. p. 114.

“ weak and ignorant, than by emboldening them to
 “ disobedience, where obedience is due.”

Mr. Dealtry and the advocates of the British and Foreign Bible Society may call this Popery—Mr. Gandolphy and the advocates of the Roman Catholic Bible Society may call it *inconsistent* Protestantism. Such, however, is the unequivocal language of the Church of England, a formal defence of which would here be out of place, and cannot be necessary at this day. It may not, however, be amiss to state briefly, in the words of Bishop Montague, the true Church of England doctrine upon the point at issue. He puts the case to “ the Gagger of Protestants.” “ If a
 “ question should be moved *juris controversi*
 “ upon controverted matters, who shall decide and
 “ settle the doubt?” “ You,” he replies, “ say the
 “ Church; and so say I; nay, so say we. You
 “ say we say the Scriptures, even against the
 “ Church. No such thing, Sir; you mistake us.
 “ We say the Church must do it, explaining, de-
 “ claring, resolving the Scriptures, as the direc-
 “ tion is from God himself, to purpose Deut.
 “ xvii. 18. and as your texts and fathers do pre-
 “ tend it, and no otherwise.” And to this it may

• Jackson’s Works, Tom. 3. p. 692. where there are some excellent observations on this subject.

† Answer to the late Gagger, 4to. 1624. p. 14.

be very useful to subjoin Leslie's illustration, as it exhibits a synopsis of the doctrine of the Church of England, and of those doctrines put in competition with it on either side, and furnishes the reader with a key, by which he may extricate his understanding in a moment from the confusion which names have produced, and may appropriate to the several subjects who come before him their real religious designation. "I suppose," says Leslie, "a traveller on his road, with a map in his hand, to come where there are three ways, and that three guides offer to direct him. The first (the Papist) says, you cannot understand the map; give it up to me: go as I direct you, and you cannot be wrong. The next (the Church of England) says, keep your map in your hand, I will go with you, and help you where the way is intricate; and I will likewise shew you my authority for becoming your guide. The third (the Dissenter) says, what can you want more than your map? Go and find your way as you can; besides, I have no authority to direct others. When we left the Roman Catholic country about two hundred and eighty years ago, we gave up all pretensions to have any *divinely* authorised guides; and have avowed ever since, that every man shall go up and down

"the country in any path to which his fancy may
"lead him?"

X.

*The Address of Patrick O'Flanagan, to the
Clergy, Gentlemen of the Vestry, and other
Opposers, (if other there be,) of the Hackney
Auxiliary Bible Society.*

Bonner's Hall, Dec. 4, 1812.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN,

STARTLE not at this affectionate
compellation from a Roman Catholic Priest;
your reasonings and conduct with regard to the
proposed Auxiliary Bible Society in this neigh-
bourhood have won my heart; and I will venture
to say that the hearts of all the sound and con-
sistent professors of the antient and venerable
MOTHER CHURCH are with you, and that interces-
sions are daily put up from our communion to the
BLESSED VIRGIN, on your behalf.

* Leslie's Works, fol. vol. 1, p. 188, where the substance of
this passage will be found, which, as it stands above, was ex-
tracted from the first letter of Candidus, in the Collection of
Papers. Rivingtons, 1812.

Go on, worthy disciples of your Lauds and Sacheverells, and may the patron saint of my native country, the holy ST. PATRICK, bestow upon you his benediction.

Well and truly do you insist on "the unavoidable evils of conscientious dissent*." Our church agrees with you that schism is the only *Anti-christ*. Ogh! that uniformity of faith had never been violated! But I am not now in a temper to reproach you for past deeds; your present avowed principles are to my heart's content, and excite in me the delightful persuasion that the time is not far distant when the sister Churches of Rome and England will meet and embrace,—when, (altering the figure,) there shall be but one fold, under one shepherd, the Supreme Bishop, Christ's Vicar.

In letters of gold should be written the First of the Second set of Resolutions in the Vestry,—that "an indiscriminating distribution of the Bible has a tendency to lessen the reverence due to the Sacred Volume." The thought was surely inspired by the ever-blessed *Saint John*, under whose patronage you assembled, who, you know, terms the sacred writings *a sealed book*: woe to those who break open the seal and discover and disperse the

* Vicar's Letter, p. 3.

holy arcana. This irrefragable doctrine of the danger of a perusal of the Bible, is, you are aware, a favourite opinion of your Roman Catholic brethren: for this, how have they been maligned by inconsiderate members of your hierarchy! Thank the holy apostles and all the saints of the calendar! you at least, under the care of *Mr. Warburton*, have returned to a *right mind*.—Your position is as much common sense as it is piety: vulgarity and profaneness are the same (*Odi Profanum Vulgus*,) nor can any thing be sacred which is common. Do we not prize articles in proportion to their scarcity? What makes the worth of a jewel? Or, in a more homely image, what is the reason that a *guinea* is more valuable now than twenty years ago? What but the scarcity of guineas? (*Minuit præsentia famam*.) Diminish then the circulation of the Bible, and you will increase its value in public estimation. Lodge the treasure in the hands of the priest, who, more properly than the magistrate, is the *custos utriusque tabulæ*, which by a free translation I render, *the Preserver*, (and a preserver is not a *distributor*), of the *sacred records*. Or, at most, imitate your forefathers, and allow only a *parish-bible*, to be chained to the altar and consulted on holidays alone, and then in the presence of the curates or keepers of souls, who shall see that the common people carry away nothing that would be pernicious. Ogh! that the Bible should ever be-

come (as the proposers of the new institution would make it) *cheap*.

Your and our common antagonists will hurl at us the charge of holding that *Ignorance is the mother of Devotion*; but let us not be frightened by words. Altering the phraseology only, let us accept the reproach, and manfully assert the principle, recognised equally by taste and piety, that obscurity is one of the sources of the sublime,—that fear springs out of darkness,—that fogginess aggrandizes objects to the view,—that, in short, as philosophy is but another name for irreligion, and as a scriptural critic is identical with a sceptic, he must be the best believer who believes most, and he the most meritorious believer who goes most on trust for his faith. The common people read the scriptures! Can they find out better articles of faith than our churches have laid down for them? The chances are a hundred to one, as the learned Professor of your communion has demonstrated, against their finding out *these*. The private sense in religion is productive of nothing but heresy; planted in the Bible, it is like the favourite fruit of my native land, the true Hesperian apple, the potatoe, full of eyes, out of every one of which sprouts a plant, which, though from a good root, bears nauseous berries.

Perhaps, however, very dear brethren, it may not

be possible to prevent at once the circulation of the book *so hard to be understood* and so easily *wrested* to mischief*; in that case, take counsel of your own Resolution (2d of Set II.) let none have it but such as “ upon due inquiry shall be found likely to make “ a right use of such a gift.” By this means, you will keep it out of the hands of Anabaptists and all the sects of the New Light : regular church-goers alone will obtain it, and from them no abuse of it is to be apprehended, 1st. because it is the fundamental article of their faith to believe only what the Church believes, and 2dly, because there cannot be much abuse where there is little use. One charge you must lay upon such as you select for the reception of Bibles, and that is, never to put them into the hands of their children, till they have got by heart and understood the Catechism and the Three Creeds.—*Understand* all these they never will, and thus, my dear brethren, you are safe.

“ The Bible contains matter that is above the “ ordinary apprehensions of mankind †.” Admirable sentiment ! For this the author should have my letter of credence to Rome for canonization. What follows from this acknowledged unintelligibility of the Scriptures, but the necessity of an uner-

* 2 Pet. iii. 16.

† Both Sides of the Question, p. 1.

ring expositor, an infallible head? Stop short of this conclusion you cannot,—but to such logicians as the *Vestry*, the argument needs not to be unfolded. *Verbum sat.*

How does it rejoice my heart, further, to find your Vicar so obedient to his *Diocesan*. I also have my *Diocesan*, and from him I learn the sentiments which are there expressed. In this neighbourhood I am but a visitor; my residence is at *****, and my spiritual superior is *Dr. John Milner, Vicar Apostolic*. He too has written against the Bible Society, and from him I shall extract a few sentences, which I almost flatter myself were before the eyes of the Vestrymen, when they drew up their Resolutions and composed their letters: this intercommunity of sentiment is another gladdening presage of a future more substantial union.

“ Is the perusal of the Bible the only means by
 “ which mankind can attain to a knowledge of the
 “ revealed truths of religion? Was it intended to
 “ be such by the divine author of Christianity, when
 “ he sent his apostles *to teach all nations, even to*
 “ *the end of the world*, without saying a single word
 “ to them about writing the gospels or epistles? In
 “ fact, our Saviour knew that ninety-nine out of a
 “ hundred of those individuals of all nations, whom

“ he sent his Apostles to convert, would neither be
 “ able to procure any written books of revelation,
 “ nor even to read them, if they could procure
 “ them *.”

“ The divine law, like the law of the land, is
 “ partly written and partly unwritten. And as it is
 “ possible that we might have known and enjoyed
 “ the British laws and constitution, though our an-
 “ cestors had been unacquainted with the use of
 “ letters, so it is possible that all the essential doc-
 “ trines and institutions of Christianity might have
 “ been transmitted to us, though the different
 “ books of the New Scripture had not been com-
 “ posed †.”

“ And what, after all, is the Word of God?
 “ ‘ It does not,’ says a holy father, ‘ consist in the
 “ ‘ letter of it, but the sense.’ For *the letter*, we
 “ are assured, *killeth, but the spirit giveth life*. If,
 “ in reading the Scriptures, we fall into essential
 “ errors with respect to its meaning, it becomes to
 “ us a dark lanthorn, or, what is worse, an *ignis*
 “ *fatuus*, instead of a beneficial light ‡.”

* An Inquiry into certain vulgar Opinions concerning the
 Catholic Inhabitants and the Antiquities of Ireland. By the
 Rev. John Milner, D.D. F.S.A. &c. 8vo. 1808. p. 186.

† Id. p. 186, 187. ‡ Id. p. 188.

“ Hence, you see, that the mere distributing of
 “ Bibles is not a sure way to diffuse the light of the
 “ Gospel amongst the people, unless you furnish
 “ them, at the same time, with some accredited in-
 “ terpretation of its meaning, which the very dis-
 “ sentions amongst honest and well-meaning people,
 “ who profess to make it their only guide, prove to
 “ be often obscure, or rather unintelligible, unless
 “ you point out to them a living, speaking tribunal,
 “ which is at all times open and ready to explain
 “ their difficulties and decide upon their contro-
 “ versies *.”

These extracts from my venerable Diocesan will shew you, very dear brethren, that *you are not far from the kingdom of heaven*. May He, the Rock of the Roman Foundation, who hath the *keys* of the heavenly city, open to you, when he shall exclude the schismatic distributors of the Bible and heresy together, and appoint them the place of *sorcerers*, as bewitching the people, and idolaters (Rev. xxii. 15.) as setting up the Scriptures in their worship.

I cannot conclude without saying what joy I felt on taking up your first publication, to find a name, ominous of mischief to the Roman Catholic prin-

* An Inquiry into certain vulgar Opinions concerning the Catholic Inhabitants and the Antiquities of Ireland. By the Rev. John Milner, D.D. F.S.A. &c. 8vo. 1808. p. 189.

ciples, set at the head of those who, in your parish, are so nobly defending our fundamental and most favourite tenet. BISHOP Warburton founded a lecture against us*; MR. Warburton is stirring himself for the crowning doctrine of our communion. May health, wealth, and heaven be given to him! May the Vestry, under his regimen, ever be bound straight and fast in the good old faith! And that, though as *sound* in their principles as they can be, they may go on improving to the world's end and beyond it, is the earnest prayer of

PATRICK O'FLANAGHAN.

P. S. Knowing the propensity of my own dear nation to *Bulls*, (I do not mean the Pope's) I employed one of the Vestrymen to revise and correct my scrawl, all but the last paragraph, in which if I have blundered and talked incoherently, the subject of it must plead my excuse: an excuse from such kindred souls as you I shall have before I ask it.

* Here again, I must quote my Diocesan: pardon any little harshness in the quotation. " Bishop Warburton has left a salary for a preacher, to prove every year at Lincoln's Inn Chapel, that the Pope is Antichrist; who, if he should succeed, would prove at the same time that the bishop himself had borrowed his orders, his liturgy and his Christianity from this chief agent of Satan." Inquiry, &c. *ut sup.* p. 233.

XI.

Reasons for thinking that Patrick O'Flanagan is the real Author of the Resolutions of the Vestry, and the Letters against the Hackney and Newington Auxiliary Bible Society.

Your Hibernian Bulls are wit-rampant in madness; your Romish Dogmas are the Hydrophobia of Religion. MS. Note on Warburton's Alliance.

REASON I. Because the language (reasoning it must not be miscalled) of those Resolutions and Letters is *Popish* and not *Protestant*. (See *Patrick's Letter*.)

REASON II. *Bull 1.* Because the ***** is made to put himself *under the care of Mr. Warburton*. (See *Correspondence between Warburton and a Warburtonian*.)

REASON III. *Bull 2.* Because the ***** is represented as giving up most unnecessarily two letters to the press, at the very moment that he declares that he has "at all times an extreme unwillingness to obtrude any observations of his in print." (See *Mr. Warburton's First Bulletin of the *****'s state of mind*.)

REASON IV. *Bull 3.* Because the Vestry are represented as minuting down the *****'s hostility to the *Bible Society*, and at the same time as thanking him for his attention to the *spiritual comforts* of his parishioners. (See *Resolutions I. and II. of the Vestry, No. 2, 1812.*)

REASON V. *Bull 4.* Because the Vestry are described as coinciding with the ***** in *opposing the Bible Society* for the sake of *preventing a spirit of opposition* in the parish. (See *Resolution I. Nov. 2.*); and because they commence a *paper-war* in order *that the peace of the parish may not be broken.*

REASON VI. *Bull 5.* Because the 1st *Resolution* of Nov. 26 declares, " That an indiscriminating distribution of the Bible has a tendency " to lessen the reverence due to the sacred volume;" which must mean, either that the more the Bible is known the less it will be respected, or that the circulation of the books of Scripture is not the way to make them known *!

* *Query, Does Patrick O'Flanagan* admit the truth of parallel propositions, as, for instance, that a general distribution of copies of a royal proclamation is the way to keep it unknown or to abate its observance?

REASON VII. *Bulls* 6, 7, 8. • Because the *Resolutions* of Nov. 26 successively declare (with modifications, indeed, but such as are absolutely nugatory,) that though the distribution of the Bible is an evil, the resolvers wish to see a copy in the hands of every family in the parish:—that such family, however, must express the very desire, (viz. of having a copy of the Bible) which the Vestry Resolutions are calculated to repress;—that if the desire be expressed it ought not to be complied with, unless it can be foreseen how compliance with it will operate, i. e. unless it be known, before the poor have the Bible, how they will understand it*; and

* This condition attached by the Vestry to the distribution of the Bible is of itself a strong presumption that the Resolution containing it was drawn up by Patrick O'Flanagan, for it is substantially and almost verbally the same as a *Resolution* of the *Council of Trent*. It is here given on authority that the *Vestry* will hold unexceptionable.

“ The fourth rule of the Index of *prohibited books*, composed upon the command and auspice of the *Council of Trent*, and published by the authority of *Pius* the fourth, *Sixtus* the fifth, and *Clement* the eighth, runs thus.—Since 'tis manifest by experience that if the Holy Bible be suffered promiscuously in the vulgar tongue, such is the temerity of men, that greater detriment than advantage will thence arise; in this matter let the judgment of the bishop or inquisitor be stood to: that with the advice of the curate or confessor, they may give leave for the reading of the Bible in the vulgar tongue, translated by Catholics, to such as they know will not receive damage, but increase of faith and piety thereby. Which faculty they shall have in writing; and

that the ***** and clergy have long been in the habit of *freely* distributing the Bible (a side reason for the non-necessity of any increased distribution of it,) but yet that the *Vestry* “ are *anxious* publicly to express their *readiness* to co-operate with their Vicar for the *fullest* attainment of his wishes, “ in the *furtherance* of *so desirable* an object.”

This exposition of Irishisms and Romanisms will, it is presumed, satisfy the parish that PATRICK O’FLANAGHAN is the *primum mobile* of the opposition to the proposed *Auxiliary Bible Society*; but whoever he be, he also is commended to *the care of Mr. Warburton*.

N.B. Should *Patrick O’Flanagan* come forth again in aid of the Vestry, he will perhaps give his opinion on the following case of *Conscience*. A clergyman feels himself bound to submit to the wishes of his *Diocesan*: his Diocesan opposes the Bible Society and he opposes it; but his Diocesan dies, and the see is filled by a warm friend of the Bible Society: here is the dilemma; how shall the said clergyman act? shall he be *consistent* in obedience and thereby *inconsistent* in conduct?

“ whosoever without such faculty shall presume to have or to read the Bible, he shall not, till he have delivered it up, receive absolution of his sins.”—*Author of the Whole Duty of Man. Lively Oracles*. 8vo. 1696, p. 190.

XII.

PARISH OF ST. JOHN AT HACKNEY.

At a Meeting of a Select Committee of the Society of Bigotry-arians, held the 14th of December, 1812, "A Letter directed to the Chairman, and laid before the Committee, was taken into Consideration—of which the following is a Copy—" (i. e. of the Consideration.)

SIR,

"WHERE ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise." This is, as you well know, the motto of our Society. "Though not a" Select Committee-man "myself, I have seen in the hands of "one of the" Committee the Resolutions of your last Meeting of the 7th of December, "and heartily concurring therein," "I beg to tender, in "furtherance of the parochial plans" of your worthy Vicar and your pious Doctor *, 100 copies of the Athanasian Creed, neatly printed on foolscap paper.

* This gentleman is from the nature of his profession denominated a M** Doctor—he has the care of the *minds* of the Vicar's flock,—the Vicar himself takes care of their souls.

“ For though I am persuaded,” with the above learned Doctors, that there is much good to be learnt from the Bible by *Select Committee-men*, yet I should be exceedingly *sorry* to see it generally circulated in your Society “ without Note or Comment;” because I fear if that were to be done, the Society itself would not hold together one month, except indeed a few of the Elect, or rather Select men, rallied round the cause from sympathy and mutual attachment.

I beg you will observe, that my intention is, that with each of the 100 Bibles given to the poor, as mentioned in your Resolutions, one copy of the Creed shall be also given as a “ Note or Comment.” Thus, with regard to the poor, “ their bane and antidote” will be “ both before them.” If any explanation of the Creed be required, I hope the worthy Doctor, who has the care of our minds, will (if he is not going to dinner at the time) have no objection to give it. It may be as well to hint to him, to touch as lightly as possible on the genuineness and authenticity of the Creed itself, and the less that is said of the Saint himself the better—these matters are with more effect discussed in a Select Committee.

“ I have only to add, that, upon the acceptance
“ of my offer being testified by my admission into

“ your Subscription List,” (though I don’t know how I am to find that out) “ under the designation “ subjoined *,” (but I fear you will think this rather a curious condition) the copies “ will be immediately forwarded to the” M. D.s “ house, by,”

Sir,

Your faithful Friend and Admirer,

* *A Member of the Society for propagating Bigotry in Foreign Parts; one of the Vice-hunters; and a Friend to the M. D.*

“ RESOLVED,—That the Thanks of” this Committee “ be and they are *hereby presented* to the “ liberal and *unknown* Writer,” (when he discovers himself) “ for his generous offer.”

“ RESOLVED,—That the” Doctor “ be requested to receive the same,” (i.e. *the offer*) “ as well “ as any others that may be made, and to superintend the distribution” of the Bibles and Creeds, —*when he gets them.*

RESOLVED,—That the Doctor be requested to have a few copies of the Creed printed and sent round to all his establishments.

“ RESOLVED,—That the above Resolutions be

“ printed and circulated among the Select Com-
 “ mittee-men.”

ORTHODOXUS, (*Prof. Norr. Cantab.*)

CHAIRMAN.

N. B. We have no objection to giving the name of *our* Chairman, though other Societies content themselves with the signature of their Clerk.

XIII.

A Letter from the Rev. R. Affleck, Vicar of Doncaster, to the Editor of the Doncaster Gazette, occasioned by the Publication of Proposals to form an Auxiliary Bible Society in that Town, earnestly recommended to the Attention of the Inhabitants of Hackney.

MR. EDITOR,

HAVING seen in your last newspaper an anonymous advertisement, inviting the inhabitants of this town and neighbourhood to form an Auxiliary Bible Society, under the patronage of Earl Fitzwilliam, and recommending the measure in terms which impute a want of reflection and Christian charity, to those who will not concur in promoting it, I am desirous to exonerate myself in the opi-

nion of my acquaintance, and especially of those with whom I am officially connected, from so much of that charge as falls evidently to my lot, by communicating to them a short statement of the reasons on which I have founded my determination not to enter into the Bible Society.

The advertisement above mentioned remarks, that "in the object and constitution of the Bible Society alone, is contained its strongest recommendation;" and afterwards defines its "object" as being "distinctly and exclusively to promote, to the widest possible extent; the circulation of the Holy Scriptures, at home and abroad." To the "object" and "constitution" of the Society I shall confine my remarks; the contemplation of these particulars having suggested to me the reasons which I am about to offer, for my resolution not to accede to the Bible Society. The "object," in my judgment, appears too narrow and defective to constitute the whole business of an extensive Christian Society, instituted for the ultimate purpose of promoting the salvation of souls. To me it appears defective, in not regarding the spiritual welfare of the persons on whom the Bibles are bestowed; in not employing any methods to secure them from religious error, to call the attention of the profligate and thoughtless to the sacred volume, and to instruct the ignorant in its use, and in the

means of rightly apprehending and conforming his life to its doctrines. If this be a defect in the object of this Society, it is a defect which must for ever remain ; for it is impossible that its members should ever agree together in any mode of supplying it. When, therefore, two methods of extensively circulating the Scriptures are submitted to my choice ; the one wholly destitute of the advantages just mentioned, the other constantly combined with them, I conceive it to be my religious duty to prefer the latter. Like the " Bible Society," the " Society for promoting Christian Knowledge," distributes the Scriptures to those who need them, at home and abroad : but in these respects the two Societies differ : the distributors of the latter are persons, for the rectitude of whose religious notions, and for whose sound piety, the Society has a sufficient security in the forms by which they are recommended and elected into it : by persons of this description, not only are Bibles distributed, but the knowledge and proper use of their contents are promoted by the judicious disposal of Books of Common Prayer, and of a vast, yet select variety of Tracts, adapted to the spiritual wants of our Christian Brethren, in every possible condition of the inward man. To that Society I have the happiness to belong ; and I cannot but think it desirable, that every endeavour to promote the knowledge of religious truth, to which I become acces-

sary by associating with others, should be governed by the regulations and aided by the advantages of that Society. I know that it is constantly urged as a proof of the pre-eminence of the Bible Society, that it distributes a much greater quantity of Bibles than any other; but this cannot be any reasonable ground of preference, unless it does this with proportionate good effect; nor can the great number of its members, and the extent of its operations, supply any argument for its further increase.

But not only does the “object” of the Bible Society appear to me to be defective in these particulars; I apprehend that its “constitution” is liable to more important objections. It is not, nor ought to be in human nature, that this Society, engaged in the propagation of religious truth, should act merely as a many-handed machine, in silently distributing the Scriptures; but together with the Scriptures will certainly issue forth, in the voices of the distributors, all the various and contrary religious tenets which the members of the Society hold dear, and therefore desire to inculcate: thus, religious falsehood, as well as religious truth, will be sweetened to the taste of the unwary receiver, by an act of the most winning and apparently disinterested kindness, the donation of the Scriptures; and will be still further recommended by the supposed sanction of this Society.

In my private judgment then, the "constitution" of this Society, the captivating appearance of which has undoubtedly enlisted numbers in its cause, is not sanctioned by conclusions drawn from a careful and comprehensive regard to the interests of religion; and I fear, indeed, the ill effects of a Society thus constituted, not only, as has been already said, in the unauthorized proceedings of its members, but in its general tendency, to confer a novel and more pleasing character on religious error, and to reduce in the estimation of the unlearned, the absurdest religious tenets to the same level with the truest as equally claiming a derivation from the Scriptures.

I should not presume to utter these opinions, nor even to entertain them, were I not as confident as a due respect for the decision of others, and a humble estimation of my own ability will allow me to be, that they will be fully justified by a reference to that book, which is the only proper guide of all our thoughts and actions, and the contents of which, those who decline and those who befriend the proposed association profess equally to revere. Be it inquired then, what authority the Scriptures afford, for an institution like the Bible Society; what permission they give or intimate to believers to unite for a religious purpose, with other believers, whom they conceive, whether justly or not, to be teachers

or maintainers of false doctrines. It is manifest that the appellation belonging to this Society of "Persons regarding the Holy Scriptures as the standard of religious Truth," would have included, in our Saviour's time, the Pharisees and Sadducees; our Lord's betrayer, and (except the Roman power) his murderers. In the time of the Apostles, it would have comprised men whom St. Paul pronounced "accursed," for the crime of "perverting the Gospel of Christ," and others whom St. Peter describes as "unlearned, unstable, and wresting the Scriptures to their destruction." The present question then is, whether, in our days, there may not be professed Christians of these descriptions; and this being possible, and even too probable, whether a Society which allows the accession of such persons is founded on truly Christian principles. If it be answered, that the possible admission of such persons is only a misfortune incidental to the Society, and that the possible evil of that event is infinitely outweighed by the good produced; let us inquire farther, whether such language will bear the test of scriptural precept, or is reconcileable with admonitions like the following: "I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them."—"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of the Lord Jesus," (an awful command indeed) "that ye

“ withdraw yourselves from every brother which
 “ walketh disorderly, and not having the tradition
 “ which he received from us.”—“ Having the form
 “ of godliness, but denying the power thereof;
 “ from such turn away.” What duty do these
 injunctions lay upon us? Certainly not that we
 should refuse to associate, for the purposes of
 common life, with the persons to whom we cannot
 but believe these descriptions to be, in some de-
 gree, applicable; but that we should abstain from
 every intercourse with them, which may hurt the
 interests of religious truth, either by countenancing
 their errors, or by bringing ourselves to think more
 favourably of them than they deserve. If the dis-
 sensions of Christians, upon religious topics, could
 render this duty impracticable, it would probably
 not have been enjoined. Every Christian has, or
 ought to have, distinct notions of certain truths
 which he deems himself obliged to believe; and be-
 lieving them, ought to exert a prudent and charita-
 ble endeavour to prevent the progress of such doc-
 trines as oppose them; and this duty extends even
 to such ordinances of human appointment as are
 believed to be agreeable to the Scriptures. The un-
 happy divisions of the Christian world ought to act
 as an incitement to the performance of this duty,
 since the neglect of it must increase or confirm them,
 and they would never have arisen had it been al-
 ways perfectly observed. If then it be acknow-

ledged, that this kind of attention to the welfare of the whole Church is a duty incumbent on Christian individuals, the inference is indisputable that Christian Societies are not exempt from it; and they ought to observe it more carefully, because the evil consequence of neglecting it will be in their case far more extensive. But the Bible Society being constituted upon a principle which rejects this duty, is consequently incapable of attending to it. But it is time to hasten to my conclusion.

I am sensible that this letter is in all respects very inadequate to the subject of which it treats, and very unprepared for the inspection of many to whose judgment it will necessarily be submitted; but the occasion required dispatch, and has offered me no opportunity of consulting with others. If the reasons which have been produced are weak and erroneous, the fault is mine; for they are derived solely from my private reflections. In the conclusion, however, which I have drawn from them, I have the satisfaction of being supported by the examples of, I believe, a very great majority of the Clergy of the Establishment. I am informed that of the Irish prelates a majority have acceded to the Bible Society; but of the twenty-six English Archbishops and Bishops, only eight Bishops are members of it. In the University of Cambridge it appears to have made but small progress, in that of

Oxford scarcely any. From these instances I apprehend that there is no weight in the assertion made in the advertisement above-mentioned, that the patronage which the Bible Society has obtained, proves the decision of eminent talent in its favour. That the more respectable inhabitants of this town and neighbourhood wish generally for the establishment of the Auxiliary Society here I have no reason to suppose; nor do I think that the circumstances of the poorer inhabitants of the town at all require it. From a careful enquiry made throughout the town, I find that about two hundred and fifty houses have no useful Bibles; but the inhabitants of many of them ought to purchase them without assistance, and some others cannot read. The whole deficiency is not so great but that it may be easily supplied in such ways as may be deemed most eligible by the charity of the most opulent inhabitants; of whom it is but just to say, that their purses are ever open to the poor. Nor has the distribution of Bibles been so neglected as might be inferred from the Advertisement. Lord Wharton's Trustees have given twenty Bibles annually to the town for the last forty years, and several of the inhabitants make frequent donations of the same kind.

I am, Mr. Editor,

Very faithfully your's,

ROBERT AFFLECK.

Vicarage, Doncaster, Oct. 28, 1812.

XIV.

Hackney and Newington Auxiliary Bible Society.

THE Provisional Committee of the HACKNEY and NEWINGTON BIBLE SOCIETY inform the Inhabitants of HACKNEY, HOMERTON, CLAPTON, STAMFORD-HILL, STOKE NEWINGTON, NEWINGTON GREEN, KINGSLAND, SHACKLEWELL, and DALSTON, that their arrangements are completed, and that the Public Meeting for the establishment of the Society will be holden at the MERMAID TAVERN, HACKNEY, ON TUESDAY THE 22d DECEMBER, at which the Secretaries of the Parent-Society have engaged to attend. The Chair will be taken at Eleven o'Clock precisely.

Seats will be provided for the Ladies *.

* It is observed by Addison that "Ladies are always of great use to the party which they espouse, and never fail to win over great numbers to it^a," and he laments that this advantage to which frequent experience has proved that their influence may be perverted, has exposed them to be made the tools of designing men of every description, who when they have a favourite project to push forward into a greater degree of popularity than its own merits will advance it, make it their first stroke of policy to inveigle the Ladies into their interest, calculating

^a Freeholder, No. iv. p. 17.

THE COMMITTEE have observed, with concern, various endeavours made in the Parish of *Hackney* to create prejudice in the minds of its respectable

upon them as amongst the most efficient of the ways and means of procuring for it patronage and support.

This is the secret history of “Seats provided for the Ladies,” which is now become so hackneyed a device, that the worldly wisdom which it displays has lost all its claim to commendation. The first transgression suggested the expedient. The Old Testament abounds with striking exemplifications of its success. Christianity, in its first progress, received, as Addison observes, a remarkable check through its instrumentality, for, “at Antioch the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable Women and the chief Men of the city, and raised a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their Coasts*.”

The fomenters of the Arian Heresy, during the period of their domination, closely copied this Jewish method of suppressing sound religion: and it is remarkable that the very Letter of Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria, (cited, Letter 6, Note r) to shew that tampering with Episcopacy is no new device, represents the same persons as having formed a party also among the Ladies, and as greatly serving their own purposes by the misguided zeal of their female confederates †.

The contrivers of that complete system of mental thralldom, the Papacy, estimated female devotees as a corner stone of the

* Freeholder, No. iv. p. 17.

† Καὶ τοῦτο μὲν, διὰ τῆς συγκατοῦντες, δι' ἐντυχίας γυναικῶν ἐτάκτων ἢ ἡπάτησαν· τοῦτο δὲ, τὸν Χριστιανισμὸν διασύροντες, ἐκ τοῦ περιτροχάζειν πᾶσαν ἀγνίαν ἀσίμνως τὰς παρ' αὐτοῖς νεωτέρας. Theodorit. Edit. Reading, Tom. iii. p. 10.

Inhabitants against the proposed object : but, judging it more consistent with the principles of that

edifice *. The French Historians state that the yoke of Popery in that kingdom was frequently upon the point of being shaken off, when the interposition and importunity of the Queens healed the impending breach, and reconciled their Sovereigns to its usurpations ; and to this very day its most successful proselytists are the Ladies ; whose intermarriages with heretics are therefore dispensed with upon every application, whilst with respect to its male members the prohibition to contract heretical alliances is on no consideration remitted.

The Antipodes to the Papists, the Puritans, who at once employed the cry of Popery to proscribe the Church of England, and its whole mystery of iniquity, for the intrinshment of themselves, were remarkably sedulous in ingratiating themselves with the Ladies, and found in female misguided zeal a most powerful propellent to the work which they had in hand, and a most successful instrument of infatuation. If money was to be raised, the Ladies lighted up and fanned the flame of liberality. “ The seamstress,” says Howell, “ brought in her silver thimble, the chamber-maid her bodkin, the cook her silver spoon into the common treasury of war ; and some sort of females were freer in their contributions, so far as to part

* *Occasione habitâ, insinuent se in animos Magnatum et Principum. Si careant uxoribus, proponantur illis Virgines in matrimonium, quæ, cum suis parentibus, nostris sint addictæ. Sic enim fiet, ut per uxores, aliàs alienos, nobis amicos reddamus.*

Feminæ ne mutant animos, aut de suo favore in nos remittant : seriò illis inculcetur amor in nostram Societatem, tum per nostros, tum per eas famulas, quæ nostris sunt addictæ : quæ variis officiis, et munusculis in amicitia conserventur. Sic enim secretiora suæ Dominæ, et ea, quæ nostros scire oportebit, evulgabunt. Arcana Societatis Jesu, publico bono vulgata. Geneva. 12mo. 1635.

Holy Book which they are desirous of disseminating, to bear reproach than to excite further degrees of

with their rings and ear-rings, as if some golden calf were to be molten and set up to be idolized *.” If some point of importance were to be carried, the zealous sisterhood addressed the House of Commons: and in one instance headed by Ann Stagg, a brewer’s wife, carried up in a very great body their own petition †. If the city upon a false alarm was to be fortified, it was wonderful, say Whitelock and May, to see Ladies themselves for the encouragement of others carrying spades and mattocks, and even digging in the foundations; or, if the soldiers were to be cheered, sending forth cart loads of provisions and wine, as they did to Turnham Green upon hearing that the King and his army were retreating ‡. And the extent to which female caballing was carried, in these turbulent times, cannot be more strikingly exemplified than by this circumstance, that, in the year 1647, the sex became the subject of burlesque in ribaldrous pamphlets, of which the Editor has seen no less than five, representing them as “in Parliament assembled,” and giving a diurnal of their proceedings.

The German Illuminati soon discovered that that mystery of iniquity which they were brooding over, and which has since turned loose such a generation of vipers upon the world, could not be brought to maturity without female assistance. “We cannot improve the men,” is the confession of Baron Dittfurt to another conspirator, “without improving the women who have such a mighty influence over them,” and then he proceeds to divulge a deep laid scheme for their seduction,

* Howell’s *Philanglus*, p. 128.

† Grey’s *Examination of Neal’s* 2d Vol. p. 331.

‡ *Memorials*, p. 58. 60. 63. *History of Parliament*, lib. 3. cap. 5. p. 91.

evil passion by repelling it, they have abstained from giving any answer to the several publications

and reckons upon them as "creating an enthusiasm which men could never equal, and as becoming their great Apostles*."

The Socinians in this kingdom, who are generally Illuminists under another name, and who have been for some moving sea and land to make proselytes, are pouring out large libations to female vanity, to procure its good offices in the furtherance of their enmity against the Christian faith. What has already been adverted to is now detailed, that "in the Monthly Repository more notice is taken of the death of any female, who happens in ever so remote a part of the kingdom to have espoused the Unitarian doctrines, than would probably be of the decease of the French Emperor †."

The Ladies are here presented with a genealogy of the device of exciting the esprit de corps among them, traced down from its original to that confederation of all Sects and of all expedients the Bible Society its latest foster-father, to all the Auxiliary Meetings of which attempts are made to decoy them by the ingratiating intimation of "seats provided for their accommodation," that a peal of spurious eloquence may be rung in their ears, the several changes of which are so dexterously modulated as to blend themselves in succession with what are called the feelings predominating amongst them, to extatise these powerful propellents, and at the same time to fascinate their understandings ‡.

* See the Letters of Baron Dittfurt under his illuminized designation of Minos. Robison's Proofs of a Conspiracy, 8vo. 1798. p. 174.

† See Nares's Remarks on Unitarian Version. Introduction, p. 11.

‡ At the Anniversary Auxiliary Meeting, at Hertford, on Whit Monday, a learned Doctor is reported to the Editor to have concluded

which have been circulated. The sole design which they have in view is to promote a wider circulation,

The Editor, equally with Mr. Nares, whose words he is adopting, is far from wishing to deprive the amiable sex of the privilege of thinking for themselves; but he conceives them to be, from the common course of their education, to the full as incompetent judges of the merits of the Bible Society question, intricate as it is made by verbiage and every species of sophistry, as they are of Unitarianism, now resolved by its Apostles into a subtle critical enquiry, and therefore very liable to be misled, and consequently to be made the instruments of misleading others, and eventually of entailing misery upon themselves. Their influence he is aware is great, for when St. Peter says that husbands not obedient to the Word may *without the word* be won by the conversation of their wives *, he places it upon an eminence beyond which it cannot be advanced: but they are respectfully reminded that in the terms of that high encomium a limitation in the exercise of it is prescribed, *the objects* being therein defined to whom it should be directed; and that this limitation is made absolute by the Apostle's enumeration of those graces from which its *beneficial* efficacy proceeds: for "*a chaste conversation, coupled with fear,*" and "*a meek and quiet spirit*" are retired excellencies, and most decidedly point out to the Ladies the bosoms of their respective families as its proper sphere of operation. The whole volume of Scripture speaks a language consonant to this. In that

a long speech with these very words: "I earnestly recommend the Society to the Ladies, for if they are active in its cause, *God will be their Lover.*" If English females can hear this without disgust and horror; this alone might supersede all further testimony of the baneful operation of the Bible Society.

* 1 Pet. iii. 1.

at home and abroad, of ONE OF THE CHIEF MEANS provided by Infinite Wisdom, for securing “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill towards men.”

beautiful delineation of the female character in the 31st chapter of Proverbs all the perfections celebrated are of a domestic nature. Amongst the lessons which St. Paul gave it in charge to Titus to enjoin the teaching of the Women subject to his Spiritual jurisdiction, that they should be “keepers at home *,” is specifically mentioned: and to the Corinthian women he issues this injunction himself, that if there be any thing which they are desirous to learn they must ask their husbands there†.

A perfect knowledge of the female character and of its characteristic infirmities doubtless suggested this restriction. These are inseparable from those qualities which constitute its amiability, and give it that sway which the Apostle celebrates as the mean by which it imparts, within its own orbit, such pre-eminent blessings to Society; but they lay it very open to the intrigues of sophisters of every description, and therefore to the danger of becoming the victim of delusion, if that reserve which is at once its ornament and its security be thrown off. The passages of History cited above are a very admonitory accumulation of evidence demonstrative of this. And if any thing can be added to the impression which they are calculated to produce, it will be acquired by the perusal of Professor Robison’s affectionate address to his Countrywomen, in his *Proofs of a Conspiracy*, from p. 243, to p. 271, which is earnestly recommended to those Ladies who frequent Auxiliary Meetings for their attentive consideration.

* Titus ii. 5.

† 1 Cor. xiv. 35.

That an object such as this should have roused the jealousy, and have been pursued by the direct opposition of CHRISTIANS, cannot but be a matter of general regret—that any of their immediate neighbours should be found in the ranks of such adversaries, is to the Committee a source of personal concern. They cannot discover what there is in the proposal to disseminate the pure word of God, by whomsoever made, which can merit such obstruction; but, remembering that the motives of those who promote, and of those who hinder the measure, must be disclosed and judged in the day on which “the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is,”—to that decision the Committee refer the question of good and evil, as to motive and end, between themselves and their opponents. That “day shall declare it.”

In the mean time, the Members of the Auxiliary Society will feel it their duty to pursue the labours which they have undertaken, knowing that “a great door and effectual is opened unto them,” for doing good; did their views extend no farther than to supply the deplorable lack of the Sacred Scriptures, proved by an actual enquiry to exist among the poorer inhabitants of the district^a.

^a Upon the probability of this imputed deficiency of the Scriptures, see the Vicar’s Letter, App. No. 3. p. 138. for

And while they dispense the HOLY SCRIPTURES ONLY, *without Note or Comment*, if others are moved to distribute the Liturgy of the Established Church, and other Books, tending to make men wise unto Salvation, they will give God thanks and bid such fellow-workers God-speed. “The Harvest truly is great, may the Lord of the Harvest send forth labourers into his Harvest.”

Let it be observed, however, that the Hackney and Newington Auxiliary Society will not overlook the important object of aiding, by its funds, the Parent-Society in its noble efforts to communicate the Word of Life to their poor and ignorant fellow-men in other countries: for in so beneficent an endeavour, what Christian would not wish to have a part!

Such is the OBJECT which the Provisional Committee of the Hackney and Newington Auxiliary Bible Society present to the judgment and feelings of the respectable Inhabitants of the district, directed, as it is hoped they will be in considering it, by the principles of the religion of HIM, who came “to seek and to save that which is lost.” The Inhabitants of the British Isles, with a zeal and

a few specimens of the accuracy with which the enquiry was conducted, see Letter 6, Note g.

harmony hitherto unexampled^c, have espoused the design of uniting their best energies in spreading

^c That a committee composed of men of character and respectability should boast of "the unexampled harmony with which the inhabitants of the British Isles have espoused a design," which has notoriously fomented division in every part of the kingdom into which its advocates have forced it, can only be accounted for by this circumstance, that the address is an anonymous publication, for the allegations contained in which none of the members deem themselves individually responsible. In this respect the hortatory productions of the Bible Society are all remarkably defective. And they have high authority for overlooking that which squeamish novices revolt at. In Leslie's Rehearsals, No. 5, the secret is disclosed. Never to matter truth or falsehood, he tells us, was the constant rule from *forty-one*, downward. But his Countryman objects:—"The rogues will be disproving our *lies*, what shall we do then? Psha, man, replies Observator, thou art an oaf. Thou art not half learned in our mystery. Disprove *quotha!* what signifies that? repeat the same lie over and over again, and with ten times more *assurance*. Never heed *answering*, who minds *answers?* 'Tis the weakest side that *answers*, they are the defendants, and it is the attacking party carries it ten to one." The last production of the Bible Society, the Oxford Address, shews that they go all the length to which this precedent carries them, for they have there *repeated the lie with tenfold assurance*. How they must laugh in their sleeves as the United Irishmen did at the Aristocrats!!! (Irish Report, App. No. IV.) In the University of Oxford, within three weeks after public declaration has been made with exulting confidence at an Auxiliary Anniversary at Hertford, (see Letter 6, Note p.) that the project which

the WORD OF GOD throughout the world—in every part of them the friends of Revelation “offer themselves willingly”—and shall it be said to those who dwell in the district of Hackney and Newington, “Why came ye not up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty^d?”

the Bible Society has in hand “will overthrow the Church Establishment;” they have succeeded in *apparently* persuading some Heads of Houses and Professors, “that this same project will tend, more than any other, to its stability and honour.” What it will really tend to, the *Querela Cantabrigiensis*, which forms a part of the *Mercurius Rusticus*, experimentally points out, which is therefore earnestly recommended to these gentlemen’s consideration. They will there see that the Puritans made it as much a point as the Bible Society have done, to gain possession of an University as “the Rendesvouz of their Association.” They will see moreover the motive specified for the anxiety which has been displayed for the attainment of this object; that “the countenance and authority which the sacred name of an University being listed their’s” would give them, was a species of support which “these subtle engineers of the great pretended work of Reformation felt that they stood, at that time, very much in need of;” and lastly, they will see the requital of these services, “what prophanations, violences, outrages, and wrongs, the chapels, colleges, and the persons of the members sustained,” from which even protections from the Parliament and the General could not deliver them.

^d There is no comparison between the injury which Revelation sustains from the sneers and blasphemous innuendoes of the infidel, and the sanctimonious misapplication of its sacred

passages by those who affect a zeal for religion; for the baneful influence of the one will only operate upon minds at best in a state of neutrality as to spiritual matters: whilst the truly pious are too frequently seduced by the imposing plausibility of the other. In this latter respect the Bible Society has incurred fearful responsibility, for in the report of speeches at its Auxiliary Meetings, there is more of this "deceitful handling of the Word of God;" more of this alledging that "the Lord hath said, when the Lord hath not spoken," more of this embodying of self-applause and railing accusation in sacred phraseology, and in the prophetic promises and denunciation of Scripture, than has disgraced the religion of the country since the days of Puritanism*.

* Wood, in his *Athenæ*, says of John Owen, "the Achitophel of Cromwell," that he had a wonderful knack of entitling all the proceedings of his own party, however villainous and inhuman, to an especial Providence, to the plainly legible conduct of Heaven, which he zealously preached up as sufficient to overturn all the obligations of conscience and religion. He could easily make the transactions of the three kingdoms to be the fulfilling of many old prophetic predictions, still teaching (as most of the brethren did), that, to pursue a success in villainy and rebellion, was to follow the guidance of providential dispensations.

Of this John Owen, it is reported by Wood, that he rung all the changes of the times, being originally a Clergyman of the Church of England—then a Presbyterian, when that faction gained the ascendancy; and, lastly, an Independent, upon perceiving them about to prevail; that he violated all oaths, first that of Canonical obedience, then the Solemn League and Covenant; and being a man of parts, and capable of moving and winning the affections of his admiring auditory almost as he pleased, he was enabled to do greater mischief, especially in preaching up Sectarism, as he did ever and anon, wherever he came. *Athenæ*, Vol. II. p. 737—741.

Of this a more aggravated instance cannot be produced, than the citation which has called forth this remark; for it is not extemporaneously accommodated to the subject in hand; in the phrenzy of Auxiliary declamation, but it is the cool and deliberate prophanation of a Committee.

That a severer reprehension is not passed than the prostitution warrants, we may appeal to the passage itself, and submit it to the judgment of every sober-minded man. It is the inspired rebuke of the Prophetess Deborah to the inhabitants of Meroz, for not joining the armies of Israel, when they were *divinely* summoned to embody themselves against Jabin, king of Canaan, who had mightily oppressed them twenty years *. He and his captain Sisera are "the mighty" against whom they are reproached with refusing to come up; and this aggravation of the offence that "they came not up to the help of the Lord" is charged upon them, because the Lord had *signified* that the battle *was His*, in reply to their cries unto him for deliverance.

The insinuations then conveyed by the adoption of this passage are in the first place, that the cause of the Bible Society is beyond all controversy the cause of God; secondly, that those who withstand its progress, are actuated by the same spirit of enmity against Him as rankled in the hearts of Jabin and Sisera, the oppressors of his antient people; and lastly, that all who do not enter into the Holy League and Covenant which it is in the act of forming, have an account to render why "they came not up to the help of the Lord against the mighty." This proclamation is made to the inhabitants of Hackney and Newington, and thus the Posse Comitatus of these two parishes is attempted to be raised against the Clergy who have unanimously discountenanced the measure, and against the principal inhabitants, Mem-

* Judges v. 23.

bers of the Church of England, who have expressed their confidence in their respective Pastors, by concurring with them in withstanding it.

The Public should be informed that this is another characteristic mark testifying to what generation the advocates of the Bible Society belong; for this passage of Scripture is not now for the first time employed to excite odium against the Church, and those who continue faithful in their attachment to it: but was produced and descanted upon for the same purpose in 1641 by that "great incendiary and "Archfiame" (as Clarendon describes him) of the Puritanical rebellion Stephen Marshall, who, as Walker, *himself a Presbyterian and* (till made to eat the fruit of his own devices) *an accomplice*, testifies, in his History of Independency, "so long cursed Meroz and neutrality; that he brought "God's curse upon the land, and put Church and Common-wealth into a flame, at which he and his brats warmed "their fingers *." Nor was he the only one chargeable with this prophanation, for it is upon record that "the Rebellious Preachers in general were wont to sound it as a common topic in the ears of the people, to make them imagine that they should fall under a grievous curse, if they, as many at least as were fit to make soldiers, did not list into the Parliament Army, to fight, what these hypocritical Rebels called, *the Lord's battles against the mighty*; viz. against the King and his friends." And the Scots, (in their declaration, Aug. 10, 1643, concerning their expedition into England) make a solemn appeal to Heaven to be saved from the Curse of Meroz; broadly insinuating that their coming to the succour of the English Rebels was the fulfilment of that religious duty, for their neglect of which the inhabitants of Meroz incurred so tremendous an imprecation.

* Walker's History of Independency, 4to. 1661, Part I. p. 80.

The Editor has now before him Marshall's Discourse upon this passage, which, excepting its perversion, in the points above specified, assuming the cause of Puritanism to be the Lord's cause, the mighty to be "*all, of what rank or quality soever*" who resisted it, and the inhabitants of Meroz to be those who refrained from coming up to its support, "*even from among God's meanest servants,*" breathes such a strain of fervent piety, that it is most painful to perceive that a man can have "the Devil in his heart, whilst such divine sentiments are issuing from his mouth;" but as Pettit (in his *Visions of Reformation*) observes, "His last words ought to be more heeded than all his preaching through his whole life, when he so often cried out King Charles!!! King Charles!!! and testified such horror and regret for the bloody confusions he had promoted *."

The hearts of the people of England are not yet sufficiently stolen away from our venerable Establishment to receive the malediction upon neutrals with which the passage is introduced, nor, it is to be hoped, is the Furor Puritanicus become sufficiently prevalent throughout the confederacy, that any subdivision of it would, in its corporate capacity, pronounce it: the mandate therefore to "curse Meroz" is suppressed; but as the Bishop of Gloucester profoundly observes, "the combination of improved success and favourable opportunity is very apt to suggest ideas which at the commencement of an undertaking were not conceived," and there is so natural an association between a crime and the divinely awarded judgment against it, that the transition from imputing the one to the pronouncement of the other is almost necessary and nearly imperceptible. Hazael thought himself degraded to a dog, when forewarned by the Prophet of the crimes which he afterwards committed,

* *Visions of Reformation* by E. Pettit, 8vo. 1683, p. 18.

and they who have so far imbibed Marshall's spirit as to identify the dubious cause which they patronize with one which God had personally avouched, and the persons who in the parishes of Hackney and Newington have resisted them, with heathen oppressors, have drunk, it is to be feared, too deeply of it to restrain themselves from being carried on to the extent of the delusion; and not merely denouncing the curse, but explaining it, as Marshall did, to imply "the speaking evil of the objects of it—the reviling them—the reproaching them—and wishing mischief to them—the doing any evil against them—the executing in deed what they would wish in words." (Marshall's Serm. p. 6.)

In the mean time, "if they have ears to hear," Deut. xviii. 20, and Jer. xiv. 15, 16, are commended to their consideration, which are equally applicable to the false *Expositor* of Prophecy, as to the false Prophet; and include moreover, in the vengeance which they threaten, as well the *deceived* as the *deceiver*. And the cases of Hananiah, Jer. xxviii. 10—17, and of Shemaiah, Ibid. xxix. 31, 32. exemplifying the punctual execution of the threatened vengeance, are further submitted, as most forcibly inculcating this seasonable lesson: that it is a fearful thing, either in the Name or with the word of God, "to teach rebellion against Him:" the guilt of which, in both the above instances, was contracted, not by any hostility excited immediately against Himself, but by setting his *duly appointed Minister* at nought.

THE ensuing account of the proceedings of the Auxiliary Meeting at Hackney obtained insertion amongst the articles of news in the Times of December 24, 1812, and therefore as intelligence collected by the Conductor of the paper for the information of his readers. But whether from an indisposition to lend himself to the palming an artifice on the public, or from an unwillingness to stand responsible for the production; the important word ADVERTISEMENT obtained precisely the position in which it is placed below; and thus has brought home to the directors of the proceedings of the day as prettily conceived a puff upon their own performances, as the pages of any public paper can produce.

The statement having thus acquired all the authenticity of an official document that the signature of the Chairman would have given it, is preserved by the Editor as a record of the grand consummation of the Provisional Committee's two months preparatory labours. It would have been most consonant with his inclination to have suffered it to tell its own tale, but it is made his duty to annex some observations to it, for the purpose of disabusing the public, to whom it conveys a very erroneous idea of the true state of things, and of vindicating that highly respectable portion of the inhabitants of Hackney who are Members of the

Church of England from the imputation which it falsely conveys, that they concurred in a measure which they all but unanimously disapproved, and used every legitimate method to prevent.

It is obvious that for this purpose he must enter into some disagreeable particulars with respect to the meeting, and must in some measure characterise those persons whose names the ensuing statement has brought before the world, but it will be his endeavour to perform this irksome duty in a manner as little personal, as the attainment of the object which he has in view will permit, and he hopes without justly subjecting himself to the reproach that he has wantonly wounded private feeling, or given any man real ground of offence, considering the unprovoked aggression, which he is withstanding, and which he pledged himself at the outset of his correspondence with Mr. Freshfield to repel to the utmost of his power.

XV.

HACKNEY AND NEWINGTON AUXILIARY BIBLE SOCIETY,

[ADVERTISEMENT.]

AN overflowing and highly respectable Meeting of the inhabitants of Hackney, Newington, and

the vicinity^a, was held on Tuesday, at the Mermaid, Hackney, for the purpose of forming a

^a The comprehensive appendage of the "*Vicinity*" subjoined in the above statement to the two Parishes of Hackney and Newington, is very dexterously introduced, and is what may be called a saving clause which just covers from impeachment the fidelity of the representation that the Meeting "overflowed with the inhabitants:" for Spitalfields and even London come within the indefinite compass of the Vicinity, and from these two *inconsiderable* places one half at least of the company was furnished. It is known that a species of canvass took place in Spitalfields to procure attendance from thence: and it is further known, that on the day of meeting all the avenues from London to Hackney were so crowded with persons enquiring the way to the Mermaid Tavern, as to occasion a constant interruption to passengers going the other way; and that this stream continued rolling down from nine o'clock, till past the hour when business was to commence.

So much for "this meeting of inhabitants" with reference to its "overflowing." To what extent it was a "highly respectable Meeting" of them as far as relates to Hackney, the Public will be better able to judge when the following particulars are considered.

The rental of the Parish of Hackney according to the present assessment is 71,000*l.*; of this 39,450*l.* is in the possession of members of the Church of England, 18,206*l.* in the possession of Dissenters of various denominations and "others *," of the residue, viz. 13,344*l.* (being in a great measure masses

* This disjunctive particle, a mean proportional between dissent and conformity, will be found adopted in the new Toleration Act as the designation of a religious body for whose special accommodation the legislature has recently deemed it expedient to provide.

Society to be called the Hackney and Newington Auxiliary Bible Society.

At 11 o'Clock, T. F. Forster, Esq. was called to the chair. He opened the business of the day in an appropriate speech, and called on the Rev. Messrs. Owen, Hughes and Steinkoff, Secretaries of the Parent Institution, to explain the nature and object of the British and Foreign Bible Society, the exertions of which they were then met to consider and support. These Gentlemen, with much pathos and power, demonstrated the truly Christian and Catholic spirit of the Bible Society, and verified the highly beneficial tendency of its operations by such plain and attractive facts as no prejudice or sophistry could disannul.

of small houses at the extremities of the Parish) the Editor could not ascertain the religious denominations of the inhabitants: they may however be legitimately divided between the two former sums according to their respective proportions, and then the comparative statement will be 48,346l. to the one, and 22,654l. to the other. It is only necessary to subjoin that, to the best of the Editor's knowledge and belief, excepting two or three who disapproving of the measure attended from curiosity to witness the proceedings, the parishioners of the first class were represented at the Meeting by the Chairman, his brother, the senior Secretary, and another gentleman. The truth is, that as far as the Parish of Hackney was concerned, (and the observation it is believed extends to Newington also,) the Meeting was an highly respectable one of Nonconformists of all shades and persuasions.

Mr. Steinkoff^b described, with great feeling, the gratitude and praise with which many hundred thousands of Christians, in all parts of the Continent, are daily mentioning British philanthropy and British piety.

^b Of the ardent zeal of this guileless well intentioned foreigner the Bible Society, who have accurately calculated the power of every part of their apparatus, always avail themselves at Auxiliary Meetings to interest the Ladies and other persons of feeling by his addresses in broken English. During his embassy to Buonaparte * the loss of stage effect from

* Of the circumstances submitted to the late Anniversary Meeting of the Cambridge Auxiliary Bible Society. (Vid. Cambridge Chronicle, Dec. 18, 1812.) "One of special interest has transpired," as the Editor with a becoming pathos announces it, which introduces Mr. Steinkoff to us in a new character; and raises his reputation for diplomatic acumen even higher than it is already estimated as a Foreign Secretary for the dispersion of Bibles; for if the report be correct, he has literally out-manceuvred *Buonaparte* in negotiation, having prevailed upon him to admit into his dominions the system of fraternization which, according to a statement of the Bible Society (see Letter 6, Note a. p. 218.) rather too unguardedly exhibited, is to afford the means of neutralizing his hostility against this kingdom and of frustrating his ambitious designs. It is not impossible however that "the French Emperor" (for the Bible Society it seems have recognised his Title,) might perversely look upon this project in the opposite point of view to that to which the Foreign Secretary designed to confine his attention, and might have the *Quixotism* to conceive that it was a convertible system of policy, and as powerful an engine of Foreign influence in his hands as in our's;—and it must be admitted, that "in our present state of unpreparedness," which the aforesaid Editor notices, "to expect patronage from him to our religious institutions," there is something sufficiently specious in this conceit, to warrant the

W. Alers^c, Esq. moved the Resolutions. He expatiated with diversified perspicuity, taste, and energy, on the numerous advantages resulting from Christian Associations, both to Society at large and to individuals.

He was followed by J. W. Freshfield, Esq.^d,

his absence was so sensibly felt, that on great occasions (See proceedings at the Mansion House) Dr. Brunmark, the respectable Pastor of the Swedish Church in London, attended to perform the character.

^c This gentleman is one of the Deacons of a Dissenting Meeting at Bow, but since his residence in Hackney he has been an attendant at Dr. Smith's Meeting.

^d This gentleman, (who imposed upon the Editor the very irksome task in which he is now engaged) comes under the description of belonging to "the vicinity" as his residence is in Hornsey Parish, though in that part of it which is contiguous to both the Parishes, "to save whose Parishioners' souls from eternal perdition" he has been so indefatigable a volun-

surmise that "in giving his countenance to the object of Mr. Steinkoff's mission" he may not have been purely *Theophilanthropic*; but may have had an eye to that reciprocity of good offices by which, *without going in the least out of their way*, the Bible Society might make him full remuneration. Indeed all this appeared so obvious to Mr. Nolan that, before the interesting intelligence transpired, he had ventured to predict that at no great distance of time the Society might expect not merely "Patronage," but a subsidy from Buonaparte. He doubts however "whether government can in prudence or with safety" "to itself tolerate this alliance," and perhaps when the reasons on which his doubts are founded have been weighed, other persons will become equally sceptical. See *Objections of a Churchman*, p. 42-44.

who in a speech of well-defined liberality, proved the correctness of the constitution of the Bible Society, and the expediency and utility of a Local Auxiliary Institution.

C. Townley, L.L.D.* moved the cordial thanks of the Meeting to the most Noble the Marquis of Downshire, for his patronage and support, in accepting the office of President. Dr. T. introduced his motion with many happy allusions to the strength

teer. It is no reflection upon Mr. Freshfield to state that exemplary as he is at present in his attendance upon the public service of the Church of England, the Editor has been assured that when he became a parishioner of Hackney he was equally exemplary in his attendance at an old and respectable Independent Meeting (Mr. Palmer's,) in St. Thomas's-square, as he had previously been at Mr. Toll's Meeting, in London Wall. Whether it be true or not, may not be matter of much importance; but if it be true, as from the particularity of the information there would seem little reason to doubt, it may perhaps account for Mr. Freshfield's still appearing inadvertently to retain the principles of Independency in Church matters, and upon these, which, whether right or wrong, are obviously not the principles of the Church of England, to justify the support which he has given to the Hackney Auxiliary Society. See Letter 6, Note b. together with the passage upon which it animadverts. See moreover Leslie's illustration of Church and Dissenting principles, p. 244. of the foregoing statement.

* This learned Civilian belongs to the Newington division of the Auxiliary district, having been an inmate with his

and purity of the Parent Society. A letter was then read from the Marquis, expressing his warm brother who resided till lately upon the Newington road, and was in preparation at the "Hoxton Independent Academy," for becoming a teacher in that connection*.

* The public cannot be more effectually introduced to the knowledge of Dr. Townley, than by the following paragraph, extracted from the Morning Chronicle of Wednesday, August 11, 1813.

"A correspondent at Margate observes, among the multitudinous amusements and occupations which engage the visitors to this gay place, every thing has given way to the astonishment excited by a project for *an entertainment at the Gardens at Dandelion*. Every person, who for the last 20 years has visited the Isle of Thanet, remembers the gaiety, the festivity, the hospitality of Townley-House, its balls, suppers, card-parties, promenades. All this has passed away. Two of Mrs. Townley's sons (leaving Doctors' Commons) are become preachers, and in addition to their *regular* and *licensed* labours, proposed to give Theological Lectures at Dandelion on Friday last. Their intention was announced by advertisements and hand-bills, with the name of the Prince Regent as Patron, the Countesses of Dartmouth and Darnley as Patronesses, the Earl of Liverpool as President, with those of Lord Heniker, and other highly respectable persons as Vice-Presidents of the General Sea-Bathing Infirmary, for the benefit of which Institution the profits were to be applied. The Gardens were to be opened at twelve o'clock, at 1s. 6d. and children 6d.; and at one o'clock Dissertations were to be delivered on the Millennium.

1st. Its Certainty, by the Rev. Charles Townley, LL.D.

2d. Its Nature,—Rev. Henry Townley.

3d. Its Approach,—Rev. Charles Maslen, of Hertford." (*This gentleman is joint Secretary with Mr. Dealtry of the Hertford Auxiliary Bible Society.*)

"Some of the neighbouring Magistrates, who have always been among the most zealous friends and supporters of that most excellent establishment, signified their disapprobation of this very objectionable project, and it was in consequence abandoned. It is unnecessary to

concurrence in the motives of the proposed Society, accompanied with a donation of 50 guineas. Dr. Townley was seconded by the

Rev. J. Clayton^f, in an eloquent address to the

Of the noble Marquis, whom he proposed as President, it is to the purpose to observe, that the only interest which he has in the parish of Hackney is about five yards square in the old church-yard, the burying place of Sir Thomas Rowe, which has descended as an heir-loom to him.

^f This gentlemen is resident in Hackney, and is registered in the Evangelical diary of the present year, as teacher of the Dissenting Meeting in Canonile-street.

add, that anxious as the Governors of the Sea Bathing Infirmary are to promote its interests, and to increase its funds, the scheme of the projected assembly at Dandelion, not only had not the sanction of their approbation, but was wholly unknown to them."

In addition to the above statement, the Morning Post of August 21st, 1813, reports, that "the party persevered," notwithstanding this discomfiture, "and gave another notice that such a Lecture would be given in a commodious and suitable place *near Sion* or *Zion Chapel*," subjoining a caution, "that an unmitigated penalty of 40*l.* would be levied on any one who should dare to disturb such a Meeting, legalized according to Act of Parliament," (the new Toleration Act), "and sanctioned by the Archbishop of Canterbury." This threat they actually proceeded to execute, for the report further states, "that a gentleman observing to another upon the ground, that he thought the preacher was talking blasphemy, he was instantly seized, collared, dragged, and hustled, and would have been very roughly handled, had not other gentlemen come up and rescued him." The reporter further states, that "the same religious farce was performed in a timber-yard at Rainsgate on the following evening."

reflection and sense of every denomination of Christians.

The Rev. T. Burnet² shewed the inconsistency

² Upon this young man, a Clergyman of the Church of England, resident in Hackney, and performing the duty of one of the Churches in London, the Editor forbears to make any observation; for though once unwarily betrayed into officiating in an unlicensed place of Public Worship, he took the earliest opportunity of relinquishing the connection, and since that noble sacrifice of interest to principle has had, the Editor verily believes, many difficulties to contend with.

With respect to the Vice-Presidents proposed by him, Mr. Baron Graham is a considerable landed proprietor, but not an inhabitant in the parish, and too much occupied in the duties of his public station to be conversant with its concerns. Whatever authority may have been obtained for the use of his name, it is not sanctioned by any pecuniary contribution. The two gentlemen next in order are the two County Members, who, from the constant recurrence of their names amongst the aristocracy of all the Auxiliary Societies of Middlesex, may be considered as Vice-Presidents *ex officio*. To the latter of them, the concluding remark upon the learned Baron is also applicable. The next Vice-President, S. Tyssen, Esq. is a considerable landed proprietor in the parish, but resides at Narborough-Hall, in Norfolk. To obtain his consent to the use made of his name, the measure was represented to him as having the actual support of the respectable inhabitants, amongst whom he naturally felt satisfied, that "the Vicar of the parish," as well as the principal gentlemen resident in it, were included, and under this impression he accepted the proffered dignity.

of Churchmen in opposing the Bible Society; and read some very appropriate quotations from the Homilies of the Church. He moved the nomination of Vice-Presidents: viz.

The Hon. Mr. Baron Graham, W. Mellish, Esq.
M.P. George Byng, Esq. M.P. Samuel Tyssen, Esq.
Lord of the Manor of Hackney, W. Willan, Esq.

Having obtained his name, to render it more ornamental, Lord of the Manor was *gratuitously* appended to it: his respectable patronage however was enjoyed but a short time, for no sooner was he made acquainted with the deceit which had been put upon him, than he directed it to be expunged, and he fortunately received the intelligence at the nick of time when he was about to remit his subscription. The Manor of Brondeswood, of which Mr. Willan, the next Vice-President, a gentleman resident at a distance in the country, is described as the Lord, (not within the district as defined by the Chairman) is a Corps of one of the Prebends of St. Paul's, and he is the Lessee of it. To give him precedence before the venerable Mr. Boddington merely because Lord of a Manor could thus be annexed to his name, extorts the reflection, what importance must the Society attach to titles, when it goes so far out of its way, and so violates decorum, to make the most of the decoration! Of the other Vice-Presidents, four have been already designated: of the remaining four, all gentlemen of high respectability, three are Dissenters of different denominations, and the other, though of late years an attendant upon the worship of the Church of England, formerly belonged to Mr. Palmer's congregation.

Lord of the Manor of Brondeswood, T. Bodding-
ton, Esq. T. F. Forster, Esq. E. Forster, Esq.
J. W. Freshfield, Esq. James Heygate, Senior, Esq.
J. Smith, Esq. J. Stonard, Esq. and Charles Town-
ley, Esq. LL.D.

The Rev. G. Hodgkins^a followed, and dwelt on
the many claims which the Bible Society had on
the support of all pious men.

Mr. Heygate, Junior, thanked the Meeting in
the name of his father, for the honour they had
conferred on his name, by selecting him as a Vice-
President.

Mr. Stonard also expressed his sense of the per-
sonal respect paid to him in like manner.

Mr. Lefroyⁱ spoke with much taste on the

^a This gentleman is the Teacher of the Independent
Meeting at Newington: for what reason the Editor does not
know, neither his name nor the place of worship at which he
officiates is registered in the Evangelical diary.

ⁱ This gentleman is not of the district, but is a part of
"the overflow from the vicinity," that is from Doughty-
street, near the Foundling Hospital; his enthusiasm in the
cause has long been conspicuous, and the correspondence
lately published of Mr. Blair and himself, with Bishop
Poynter and Mr. Gandolphy, &c. and animadverted upon
p. 237—244. has given indelible celebrity to his name. Un-

general grandeur of Christianity, and moved for W. Alers, Esq. to be appointed Treasurer.

The Rev. H. F. Burder^k seconded the motion in a speech of great neatness and piety.

The Rev. Mr. Cox¹ then moved, that the Rev. T. Burnet, Rev. Dr. Smith, and Mr. Wenham, Junior, be appointed Secretaries, and signified his approbation of the whole plan of the Bible Society,

less the Editor has been misinformed (and he received his information from several persons on the day of the Meeting) the promptitude of the Chairman to suppress all sounds merely ominous of discordancy had nearly stifled in limine "his tasty representation of the general grandeur of Christianity," (as his panegyrist describes it) its introductory sentence containing some apparently inharmonious expressions by which a prejudice against it was excited.

^k This gentleman is registered in the Evangelical diary as joint Teacher of the old Independent Meeting in St. Thomas's Square.

¹ This gentleman is registered in the same repository as the Teacher of the new Baptist Meeting in Mare-street. Of the Secretaries nominated by him, the first has been made mention of before; the second was till lately the respectable Head of the old Protestant Dissenters' Academy in Homer-ton, and now officiates at the Meeting in connection with it in what is called Hackney Gravel Pit: the third, upon the best information which the Editor can obtain, now attends the new Meeting, in Clapton.

in terms of persuasive effect and animated candour. He was followed by

E. Forster, Esq. who, with polite commendation, bore testimony to the abilities and active benevolence of the proposed Secretaries. The sixth motion was brought forward by the Rev. Dr. Smith. In a short, but sensible address, he moved the formation of the Committee. To second his motion, the Rev. T. Sheppard^m came forward, and spoke

^m This gentleman is registered in the Evangelical Diary, as the "*reputed preacher of the Gospel*," at Stoke Newington Church, which appears by this Sectarian Chronicle only to enjoy the privilege in the afternoon of Sunday, though the venerable Rector, Dr. Gaskin, officiates there in the morning.

The Committee nominated by Mr. Sheppard are as follows:

William Allen.	William Kent.
William Baxter.	Jabez Legg.
Daniel Britten, sen.	Joseph Luck.
John Cowie.	Thomas Marshall.
Joseph Goodheart.	Thomas Ramsay.
George Gaviller.	Thomas Savill.
George Greaves, sen.	William Slark.
George Greaves, jun.	John Surgey.
Stephen Hope.	Richard Stubbs.
William Hale.	John Usborn.
Benjamin Hutton.	Joseph Williams, sen.
Samuel Jackson.	Joseph Williams, jun.
T. H. Jackson.	James Young.

With power to add to their number not exceeding twenty other inhabitants.

with great animation and effect. The Rev. S. Palmerⁿ, with a happy allusion to the peaceful demeanour and tendency of Auxiliary Bible Societies, moved the thanks of the Meeting to the Provisional Committee. He was seconded by the Rev. J. Hill^o, who expressed himself on the general subject with much Christian liberality. In the name of the Provisional Committee, thanks were returned to

Of these gentlemen at the utmost only four are in pastoral connection with the Parochial Clergy, either of Hackney or Newington, and it is believed that two of these were overpersuaded by importunity; and most certainly, according to the printed statement, they have not sanctioned by any pecuniary contribution the use made of their names. It should seem therefore, that a fundamental rule of the Parent Society specifically adopted into the Hackney Auxiliary Code, which requires that half the Committee should be members of the Church of England, whilst it has been thus publicly recognized, has been virtually set at nought.

ⁿ This gentleman has for many years had the charge of the old Independent Meeting, in St. Thomas's Square; and has so reputably and so peaceably filled that station, that the Editor, as one of the Parochial Clergy, is truly concerned, that the line of conduct, which, in connection with the Vicar and his other Curates, he felt it his duty to pursue, should have excited him to alter his resolution, and to take part in a measure from which, as in his opinion unnecessary, he at first withheld his concurrence.

• This gentlemen is assistant to Dr. Smith, at the Gravel Pit Meeting.

Mr. Young^p. This gentleman spokè with warmth on the dull inactivity of many professing Christianity in promoting good designs.

The Rev. C. W. Le Bas^q descanted with much eloquent demonstration on the incoherence and absurdity of most of the objections insidiously cast against the Bible Society. He concluded, by moving the thanks of the Meeting to the Secretaries of the Parent Society, for their attendance and services.

^p This gentleman is an attendant at the New Socinian Meeting.

^q This gentleman, being the Rector of Shadwell, must be assigned over to the complement furnished from "*the Vicinity*." His presence at the Meeting undoubtedly reflected a credit upon it which (as far as the Church of England is concerned) it received from no other individual: for Mr. Le Bas is a clergyman of high respectability. It is therefore much to be regretted, that he was not aware that the Parochial Clergy of Hackney were unanimous in most conscientiously disapproving of the measure, and that the Vicar and the Vestry had both publicly protested against it, as in their judgment calculated to increase the evils of division, without answering any beneficial purpose, for the effecting of which obvious and ample means were not already provided. It is known to the Editor, that had he been apprized of this, no consideration would have induced him so far to forget that deference which is due from one clergyman to another within their respective parishes, as to have trespassed within the limits of their charge to give it his support.

This was seconded by the Rev. T. Jones^r, of Hornsey, who gave his cordial support to the business of the day.

In the name of the Secretaries, the Rev. J. Owen^s returned thanks. He expatiated, in his usual flow of Christian ardour and eloquence, on the unlimited good resulting from such Societies as were now forming in all countries on the plan of the

^r This gentleman is stated to be "from Hornsey." He was once just about to be of St. George the Martyr, Queen's Square, but the Rector put a hasty termination to that engagement, because in a Charity Sermon delivered in that Church, he was pleased to edify the congregation with the following sentiments, "that a person who should charge Mr. Lancaster with "personal or party views would have charged Christ himself "with being interested," that "Mr. Lancaster's selfishness, "if he was accused of any, was the selfishness, he had almost "said, of Divinity," and that "in the estimation of Christ, "the King's patronising Mr. L. was the brightest jewel in "his crown." This *hard measure* produced a violent Philip-
pic against the Rector in the shape of a Letter on Ecclesiastical Liberty, printed for Gale and Curtis, Paternoster-row, 1812, in which the above sentiments are recorded, p. 42, 43.

^s The name of Mr. Owen is become his sufficient designation. There is however one other circumstance respecting him in addition to the few interesting particulars occasionally detailed in the course of the preceding pages, which perhaps the members of the Church of England are not generally apprized of, and which it is not unimportant for them to know, and that is, that his connection with Fulham Church has procured it the honour of being registered in the Evangelical Diary as one

British and Foreign Bible Society; and congratulated the district on containing so many liberal,

of those "churches * in which the Gospel is reputed to be "preached in the *afternoon*," when it states Mr. O. to occupy the pulpit: the morning being left in blank as a tacit compliment to the Bishop of the Diocese, who frequently preaches, and to his Chaplain Mr. Wood the present zealous and learned Rector. In his peroration he is reported to have "adverted "in a strain of dignified rebuke," (i. e. as one of his audience informed the Editor, in great agitation and wrath,) on some printed animadversions in which his name had been brought forward †; and most certainly if he could "advert" to the purpose upon these animadversions, i. e. could shew that they "had the merit," (as Mr. Freshfield ventures to affirm) "of "commenting upon sentiments which were never uttered by "him," the dignified rebuke would have well become him, and the expenditure of animal spirits would have been turned to excellent account; for the animadversions make rather an awkward disclosure of what spirit he is, and whither his zeal might carry him, if power were in his hand. But the words are brought so completely home to him (see Appendix ix. note y) and are verified to be an exact transcript of those he uttered, by so complete a body of evidence, that every attempt to disengage himself from them only increases their adhesion, at the same time that it shews of what consequence he deems it to have the connection dissolved.

* Of the 150 churches within the Bills of Mortality, the Evangelical Diary only registers 34, and yet on its title page states its list of churches to be "*correct*," thus placing under a ban of excommunication those in which the great body of the regular Clergy officiate; and admitting those only to be the Houses of God in which the imaginations of the different shades of Calvinists are worshipped.

† See Animadversions. Collection of Documents, No. 2.

faithful, and zealous promoters of what was truly a blessed work. He adverted in a strain of dignified rebuke, to those pointed animadversions on the Bible Society, wherein his name had been dragged forward, surrounded with falsities, and unchristian comments.

Mr. Hale ' moved the thanks of the Meeting to the chairman for his able conduct in the chair ; which was seconded by Mr. Hobson ", and carried with unanimous applause, as were all the preceding motions.

The Meeting closed about a quarter past five, and the company retired highly gratified. Before they left the room, a considerable sum was received in donations and annual subscriptions.

' This gentleman is a member of Dr. Smith's congregation.

* This gentleman is a respectable inhabitant of the Newington division of the district. He was by education a Quaker, but the Editor has not been able to ascertain his present persuasion.

The Constituent Resolutions of the Hackney and Newington Auxiliary Society.

At a numerous meeting of the inhabitants of Hackney, Homerton, Clapton, Stamford Hill, Newington, Newington Green, Kingsland, Shacklewell, and Dalston, held at the Mermaid Tavern; Hackney, on Tuesday, the 22d of December, 1812, for the formation of an Auxiliary Bible Society, the following Resolutions were unanimously adopted.

“ RESOLUTIONS.

“ I. THAT the object and constitution of THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY have the cordial approbation of this Meeting.

“ II. That a Society be formed to be called “ THE HACKNEY AND NEWINGTON AUXILIARY BIBLE SOCIETY;” for the purpose of disseminating the Holy Scriptures in Hackney, Homerton, Clapton, Stamford-Hill, Newington, Newington-Green, Kingsland, Shacklewell, Dalston, and the Neighbourhood, and of co-operating with the BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY, in promoting their distribution at home and abroad.

“ III. That conformably to the principles of the Parent Institution, the Bibles and Testaments to be circulated by this Society shall be without Note or Comment, and those in the Languages of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, of the authorized Version only.

“ IV. That all persons subscribing One Guinea, or upwards, per annum, shall be Members of this Society.

“ V. That all persons subscribing Ten Guineas, or upwards, at one time, shall be Members of this Society for life.

“ VI. That the business of this Society shall be conducted by a President, Vice-Presidents, a Treasurer, Secretaries, and a Committee, who shall have the nomination of all Officers, and that five Members of this Committee shall constitute a Quorum.

“ VII. That, in conformity with the principles of the Parent Institution, half the Committee shall consist of Members of the Established Church, and half to be chosen from other religious denominations.

“ VIII. That every Clergyman, or other Christian Minister, who is a Member of this Society, shall be entitled to attend and vote at the Meetings of the Committee.

“ IX. That all persons subscribing Five Guineas, or upwards, annually, shall be entitled to the same privilege.

“ X. That the Committee shall meet once every month, or oftener, on some day to be fixed by themselves.

“ XI. That the Secretaries be empowered to summon special Meetings of the Committee, on the requisition of five of its Members.

“ XII. That the whole of the Subscriptions and Donations received by this Society, after deducting incidental expences, shall be remitted to the Parent Institution, from time to time, within the year, as the Committee may direct, in consideration of the advantages held out to Auxiliary Societies, *viz.* “ That the Committee of such Society shall be entitled to receive gratuitously (if their local necessities shall require it) a supply of Bibles and Testaments, estimated at prime cost, to the amount of half the entire sum remitted by them to the Parent Institution within the year; and further, that Members of Auxiliary Societies shall be entitled to the privilege of purchasing from the depository of such Auxiliary Societies, Bibles and Testaments, on the same conditions as the Members of the Parent Institution.”

“ XIII. That, for the purpose of giving full effect to the benevolent designs of the BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY, the Committee shall make it their business to enquire by means of Sub-Committees, associated, if they wish it, with any other Subscribers, what families, or individuals residing within the district are in want of Bibles and Testaments, and unable to procure them, and that it shall be the duty of the Committees to furnish them therewith, at reduced prices, or gratis, according to their circumstances. It is, however, recommended, in all cases, to prefer supplying the poor by sale rather than by gift.

“ XIV. That all the money received for Bibles and Testaments sold to the poor at reduced prices, be expended in the purchases of more copies at prime cost, to be added to the stock received gratuitously from the Parent Society, and to be distributed in like manner, by gift or sale, till all the poor within the extent of this Society be supplied with the Holy Scriptures.

“ XV. That the Poor's Stock be kept separate from that by which Subscribers are to be supplied at reduced prices; but if any books are spared from that stock for a temporary supply of such privilege, they must be carefully replaced, and the poor's stock preserved entire for its peculiar purpose.

“ XVI. That immediate attention be given by the Committee to the recommendation of every Clergyman and Dissenting Minister within the district, whether a Subscriber or not, as to the proper objects for early relief.

“ XVII. That such persons as may not find it convenient to become Members of the Auxiliary Society, shall, upon forming themselves into Bible Associations, be entitled to purchase at the depository of such Society, under the direction of the Committee, copies of the Scriptures, at prime cost, for gratuitous distribution, or sale, at reduced prices, among their poorer neighbours.

“ XVIII. That a General Meeting of the Subscribers be annually held the first week in December, when the accounts shall be presented, the proceedings of the past year stated, a new Committee appointed, and a Report agreed upon to be printed, under the direction of the Committee, and circulated among the Members.

“ XIX. That in the formation of the new Committee, the Treasurer, Secretaries, and such three-fourths of the other Members as have most frequently attended the Committee, shall be re-eligible for the ensuing year.

“ XX. That annual Subscriptions and Donations be now entered into, and that they be also received by the Treasurer, the Secretaries, and the several Members of the Committee.”

Within a short time after the General Meeting, whose proceedings were thus reported, the constituent resolutions with an Address of eight pages subjoined, from the Committee of the new Society, were circulated through the Parish; the purport of which was in the first place to set forth the duty and the benefits of a private perusal of the Scriptures; which doubtless every conscientious member of the Church of England is ready to admit, and which, after the statement in the Vicar's letter, (App. No. III.) it is unnecessary to say that both he and his Curates had been endeavouring to inculcate and promote to the utmost of their power, long before the Bible Society had existence.

The Address, indeed, admits this specifically with respect to the Heads of both the Parishes included within the Auxiliary district. It proceeds, however, to represent that an enquiry of a very limited extent (for some remarks on the manner of conducting which see Letter 6, Note 9,) discovered a deplorable deficiency—it conveys a pledge from the committee, that “ the Society, if supported by the inhabitants, will place the Scriptures in the hands of every poor family throughout this extensive district,” and it concludes as usual with a string of quotations from Scripture, promiscuously taken without any reference to their respective contexts, conveying over all the blessings of the Gospel to those who should contribute, and announcing the intention of the committee to wait personally upon all the inhabitants to solicit and to receive their contributions^Y.

^Y Mr. Witherby in a Letter to Dr. Wordsworth, published in 1810, called the public attention to the *illegality* of this proceeding, and sounded the alarm that a precedent “ was establishing, which if not controuled would produce much mischief.” This is now sufficiently obvious, and will be more and more so every day. Surely the guardians of the Royal prerogative should before this time have taken the hint. Is “ a Brief, whereby his Majesty grants his *Royal Licence* and *Authority* (to the parish or person in whose favour it is granted), to ask and receive of his loving Subjects their charitable contributions, a mere form? Can that otherwise *legally* be done, which *it* actually gives *authority* to do?” These are questions

Accordingly without loss of time this personal visitation was made, and though with the exception of the Chairman of the General Meeting, his brother, and the other Vice-President stated to be an attendant upon the ministrations of the Parochial Clergy, they did not collect 50*l.* as benefactions; nor 20*l.* as Annual Subscriptions, from this highly respectable class of the parishioners; yet according to the statement inserted in the Report of the Parent Society, the whole collection amounted to Benefactions 533*l.* 2*s.* and annual Subscriptions, 222*l.* 3*s.* 6*d.* of which latter sum, 27*l.* 4*s.* being the annual Subscriptions of those who gave benefactions, possibly was not paid in advance, and therefore, to avoid over-rating the actual collection, is to be deducted from it.

The sum then immediately disposable to the purposes of the institution, this possible deduction being made, was 728*l.* 1*s.* 6*d.* the whole of which, with the exception of incidental expences, was by the 12th resolution of the Constituent Meeting to be paid over to the Parent Society, "in consideration of the advantages held out to Auxiliary So-

of grave consideration, and ought to have been taken cognizance of with less delay, for (as Mr. Witherby again,) "NOW is not the time to slight ROYAL GRANTS, or to act as if they were *mere unmeaning forms* and no longer necessary to be resorted to."

cieties" making that appropriation of their funds^z. (See the 12th Resolution of the Constituent Meeting.)

It is only necessary to the present purpose to mention one of the two items under which these advantages are set forth, viz. that the Parent Society, if required, engages to return to the Committee of each of these subordinate institutions, in Bibles, estimated at prime cost, one half of the money which that Committee remits. Here then was provision made for an immediate supply of 1432 Bibles, of the two sizes which the Committee have distributed, (as the Editor after very laborious enquiry has seen a single specimen of each) and for a further supply annually of 474 more^a.

^z It appears by the last Report of the British and Foreign Bible Society, that 500*l.* have been already paid into the general fund. The Hackney Auxiliary Society have therefore 228*l.* 1*s.* 6*d.* yet in hand to account for.

^a Had the Vicar's pacific proposition * been acceded to, the same sums of money would have procured from the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2306 Bibles of the same size

* This proposition was first made privately to Mr. Freshfield, but was not so far entertained by that gentleman as to induce him to accede to an interview with the Vicar to which he was invited. It was therefore never detailed at length, but is briefly submitted to the consideration of the Vestry, in the last passage of the Vicar's reply to their vote of thanks to him. App. No. III.

The extent of the provision being thus ascertained, it is now requisite to look back to the "deplorable deficiency" which called forth, in the two preliminary addresses to the inhabitants of Hackney, such pathetic lamentations; and the statement is, that "of 783 families, which were visited by the Provisional Committee, 421 were without Bible or Testament. That those families contained 1683 persons, and that of that number 1030, were able to read." This statement, it is obvious, is very dextrously made, not for the purpose of elucidating the matter, but for producing convenient obscurity; as the exhibition of families alledged to be in want of Bibles has thus, to swell its apparent amount, all the ad-

type and paper, immediately, and an annual supply of 808: (i. e.) an excess of 874 in the first instance, and of 334 annually, above what its rival institution holds forth to the "Auxiliary Societies as the greatest possible encouragement" to throw into the common stock the whole of their funds.

It grants, moreover, to every individual Member the privilege of purchasing at its reduced prices, not merely to the amount of five Guineas, to which the Bible Society privilege is restricted, but without any limitation. Who can read this statement without admiring the confidence with which the Bible Society presumes upon the credulity of the country! It demands half of every Auxiliary collection as the consideration for furnishing it with Bibles at *cost prices*, and it calls this an *advantageous proposal*, nay, *the greatest possible encouragement!* The Booksellers' trade profits are 25 per cent. the Bible Society's exactly double!

vantage of those whose members are wholly included in the 653 individuals to whom, it is admitted by the Committee that a Bible would be a *useless gratuity*, as well of those composed entirely, or in part, of the 1030, whom they state to have the knowledge necessary to read it. Taking, however, for the present the computation as it stands, the immediate supply provided is nearly equal to three and a half times the quantum of defect alledged to have been discovered : but the investigation is represented as having been limited to one seventh of the whole district^b, which representation if it be correct at once consumes all the surplus in hand, and strikes a balance against the Auxiliary fund of one half of the original deficiency ; should the inquisitors, in spying out the nakedness of the land, be equally successful in their further researches.

But the Parliamentary Census tells a very different tale, for by that it appears that the families in Hackney, at the close of the year 1811, amounted to 3125, and that those in Newington amounted to 375. As population is gradually increasing, and as a year had elapsed between the Census, which

^b “ The limits of the Society ” as defined by the Chairman at the Constituent Meeting are “ Hackney, Homerton, Clapton, Stamford-Hill, Stoke-Newington, Newington-Green, Kingsland, Shacklewell, and Dalston.” Report of Proceedings. P. 9.

Parliament directed, and that of the Provincial Committee, to make ample allowance for such increase, let all the houses stated in the Parliamentary Census to be in both parishes, either uninhabited or building, be taken into the account, viz. in Hackney 183, and in Newington 22, which will give 3705, as the amount of the families within the district : (i. e.) 1776 families less, as the whole population comprising rich and poor, than what the Committee's representation of the latter only of these two descriptions of parishioners amounts to.

But subsequent proceedings require not merely the exposure of the mis-statement, but as nearly as possible the accurate ascertainment of the truth; and by the process exhibited below, the number of families within the district, who are objects of Bible Society benevolence, is so far ascertained, that 1105 may be confidently exhibited as the utmost amount of those, who *upon the principles laid down by the Auxiliaries, and upon their own data*, come under that description ^c.

^c The process by which the above estimate was attained is as follows :

All houses charged at a rental of 20l. per annum and upwards were deemed unquestionably inhabited by persons whose circumstances placed them above that class of parishioners, who are specifically set forth as the objects of Auxiliary inquiry and relief.

It should seem then that this new Apostolate, from whatever sources derived, had obtained as

This line being drawn, the number of houses in Hackney under 20l. per annum was ascertained from a special survey, very recently taken, and was found to be 1263. The like inquiry was made with respect to Newington, and by the parochial rate-book it appeared, that the houses in that parish of the rental in question were 140. To these two sums, the excess of families above houses in both parishes, taken from the Parliamentary Census, and amounting in Hackney to 426, and in Newington to 33, was subjoined, and the total of these four items, viz. 1862, was considered as exhibiting upon the most enlarged calculation the families sought after, as far as Hackney and Newington were concerned.

But within the compass of the Auxiliary District small portions of the outskirts of Hornsey and Islington were stated to be included. To make, therefore, a most profuse allowance for the families which these portions contain, and which, except by personal survey, it would be impossible to calculate, 487 (as enabling the Editor to speak in round numbers) were thrown into the account, and thus the total became raised to 2349; and the 783 families, which the Auxiliarists state themselves to have visited, and represent as only one-seventh of the whole district, are proved to be at least one-third. The whole number of poor families in the district being thus computed, the data of the Auxiliarists were again referred to, and the proportions of those provided with, and those wanting Bibles, were adjusted by them: and it will be found upon examination, that as 783, the families stated to have been visited by them is to 421, those which they alledge to have found unfurnished with the Sacred Volume, so is 2349 to 1263.

This last sum then was taken as the amount of the poor families in the district, in which, according to the data fur-

the fruit of their exertions their whole hearts' desire^f. Money was confided to their disposal to be divided in equal portions between the Bible Society's British and Foreign concerns: and with respect to the former of these portions in ample sufficiency, to enable them to compleat their investigation, with the comfortable assurance, that however "deplorable the lack might be," they had the means in hand of supplying it, and would have a surplus in store of 327 Bibles, to be annually replenished by 474 more, to meet growing necessities as

nished, the deplorable deficiency prevailed; but as the Auxiliaries have withheld the information which they might have given, what was the proportion of the whole families which they found unable to read, a conjectural deduction became necessary; and as it appears from their own statement, that when the families were resolved into individuals, one-third came under that description, it was thought that one-eighth in their consolidated state, could not be an immoderate deduction, and that being made, 1105, the number above specified, is the remainder*.

^f "By becoming a Member of an Auxiliary Society, I can ensure an *effectual and permanent* supply of my immediate vicinity." Mr. Freshfield's third Reason for becoming an Auxiliary Associate. See his Remarks, &c. App. 9.

* Some idea may be formed of the exorbitance of this allowance by the following fact: that the agent employed to make personal enquiry in Well-street and its vicinity, reported to the Committee of that district, that he did not find a single family without a Bible. The Editor received this information from his own mouth.

they might arise ; nay were those cases which had most tenderly touched their sensibilities as general as their representation had set forth, in which the “ earnestness of desire on the part of the poor to “ enjoy *the privilege* of reading the Scriptures was “ manifested by declarations of willingness, notwithstanding their extreme poverty, to contribute “ their humble pittance towards procuring Bibles “ for themselves and families,” they were furnished with resources for making an individual distribution, and might at once have carried into full effect the specious pretext of their Institution, and have dispersed Bibles through the parish to the amount of the persons represented in their own statement to be in want.

Six months however were suffered to elapse, before any tidings of the distribution of Bibles were heard[§], or any further steps taken to compleat the investigation of deficiency. During this period the imperious impulse “ to turn his poor neighbours “ from the error of their ways,” under which Mr.

§ A single exception to the above statement has recently come to the Editor's knowledge, in the case of one Member of the Auxiliary Committee, a respectable Churchman, who distributed amongst his neighbours, in a remote corner of the parish, Bibles and Testaments to the number of about fifteen of each, as soon as he obtained them ; but all the Editor's enquiries, and they have been numerous, amongst persons hav-

Freshfield addressed himself to the Editor in November, to all outward appearance had subsided, and the very consummation which, according to the common course of things, should have set all his energies to work, seemed to have had upon him the chilling effect of "the prejudice," which he deprecated, and to have "paralysed his exertions."

But within the last month the problem has been solved by the farther developement of Bible Society's devices ; for such confidence have the engineers of the institution placed upon the infatuation that prevails, that, out of all proportion to the pretext of their proceedings as are the means accumulated for carrying it into effect, they have yet ventured under cover of it upon a new species of levy, which is to inveigle the lower orders into the confederation. And as Mr. Freshfield and his associates could not be content to execute the plans of the Society in this new province of its spiritual empire, but after the most perfect model ; although for the purpose of ascertaining and supplying the want of Bibles throughout the district, their constituent code had

ing continual intercourse with the poor, confirm what he has above alledged, without any other exception. He does not mean to say that there are no exceptions, but that, having used every means possible to discover them, he has failed of success.

already organised a Committee of twenty-six members, assisted by eight resident Vice-Presidents, and three Secretaries, with power to add twenty more of the inhabitants to their number; yet three cautiously worded resolutions were introduced into it, having a prospective reference to this further proselytism, and the six months of apparent inactivity have been employed in the subdivision of the district into four subordinate associations, and the enrolment of recruits chiefly from that class in society more immediately connected with the poor, to compose the Committees to each of these; and, as the extortioners of the Institution, to make the weekly penny assessment upon such of their indigent neighbours as the various seductive expedients employed should beguile into the making this simoniacal contract for their salvation ^h.

For this purpose, in three of these subdivisions,

^h “ Let every one who hears me duly weigh and consider what has been said, and as he dearly values the salvation of his soul, let him lay up what he can spare from his weekly earnings, for the great purpose of providing himself and his still poorer neighbours (if he should be blessed with the means) with a copy of the Holy Scriptures; and may the Lord Almighty prosper him in his glorious undertaking.” Close of the President’s speech at the Clapton Bible Association Meeting.

the Meeting-houses ⁱ have been converted into Committee-rooms, and in the fourth, without permission of the proprietors, an empty brewhouse has been used, where the Members of the Auxiliary Com-

ⁱ In the Parish of Hackney the Bible Associators have been obliged to put up with places of assembling below those they aspire to wherever the full extent of their wishes can be attained, for the edifice which they first covet is the Church; and they have acquired that confidence, that at Bishopsgate, presuming upon the advanced age and absence of the Rector, they literally summoned their meeting in that Church, and placarded the parish with notices to that effect, without any communication with him, or licence from the churchwardens. On his return on the evening next but one before that appointed for the meeting, Sunday being the intervening day, he found things in this state; and apprehending serious commotions should he direct the Church-doors to be shut against the assembly convened, without sufficient notice to prevent their coming together, he thought it best to make a compromise; and on the stipulation of the Chairman that decency should be preserved, to acquiesce in the invasion. It is remarkable that the Gentleman, who took the post of honour on this occasion, is the same who is referred to in the foregoing note, and whose zeal in the cause, or taste for the situation, has prevailed with him to preside twice in the Meeting-houses in Hackney on similar occasions. It will doubtless induce him to temper his fervency in future with a little more circumspection, to be informed what, it is hoped, he is not aware of, that not only was the Chandelier of the Church made to give place to his convenient elevation upon the hustings, with which that sacred edifice was desecrated; but that the Communion-Table at Mr.

mittee, assuming the shape of new provisional Committees, have been sitting weekly, issuing forth citations to the tradesmen of the parish to attend them, and serving upon the poor individually at their own houses addresses powerfully delusive, together with an inquisitorial paper. The last question of which intimates, that a general meeting is about to be held for the subdivision in which it is distributed, and requires an answer from them in writing, whether or no they will attend it. This expedient having been allowed its due time to work, and the aforesaid paper having been again collected and the returns ascertained, the four divisions in succession have announced their several meetings, distributing the notices of these from house to house, soliciting especially the attendance of the poor; and in one instance, when the Lecturer of Stoke Newington was to preside, placarding that portion of the district with the annunciation. On the evening appointed (generally of a Monday, when the earnings of the preceding week have just been received, and which is therefore made a day of idleness by many of

Palmer's Meeting-house paid him still greater deference, being made, what the Editor shudders to relate, the support of the seat he sat upon and the resting-place of his feet. As doubtful authority would not justify the detailing this; the Editor feels it necessary to state, that he received his information in the former instance from the venerable Rector; and in the latter from the person who fixed the chair.

the poor ¹) the same course of proceeding is adopted as that systematically arranged, and proved by extensive experience to be so successful at the general meetings of the superior departments of the Institution. A sort of stage is erected, and a detachment of orators attend, whose parts have all been previously arranged, and the several motions to pass the resolutions, to appoint a President, Treasurer, Secretaries, Committee, &c. are made the occasions of enthusiastic declamation, representing the object of the Society as one intimately connected with the eternal interests of the poor, and as so effectual in its operation, that it will place this important concern in perfect security.

Having made this statement of the finishing stroke of Auxiliary policy ; it only remains to put the reader in possession of the documents upon which it is founded, and to bring this long, but it is hoped not unimportant, investigation to a close. As an introduction however to these Parochial Papers, it may be useful to exhibit a specimen of an earlier date, that the first essays of the Bible Society in confede-

¹ In this parish, the two last meetings have been an exception to this political arrangement, Wednesday having been in both instances the day appointed ; but Monday is in general the day throughout London and its vicinity. In the country, the afternoons of market days have been made choice of obviously upon the same principle.

rating the lower orders may be put upon record, and that the improvements of the present year may be rendered more conspicuous.

There is no mention of Bible Associations in the Reports of the Bible Society before the year 1812. They then appear, included with Auxiliary and Branch Societies in the usual vote of thanks passed at the anniversary of the Parent Institution to all its dependencies, and in the Report of that year their "establishment is recommended as an addition to the plan for ascertaining the local want of the Holy Scriptures referred to in their last Report, and as the result of attention practically devoted by the Committee to this important object^k."

Promptitude is the characteristic of the Bible Society Associates. Accordingly, within a fortnight after the above recommendation was delivered (amongst doubtless many similar efforts of the same

^k To give all the facility and encouragement possible to this urgent recommendation, an official synopsis of the Auxiliary System in its perfect state, together with "Hints on the Constitution and Objects of Auxiliary and Subordinate Societies" is printed by the Parent Society upon a folio sheet, ready to be forwarded, by post, at a moment's warning from the central depository to any part of the kingdom, which in half an hour will indoctrinate any zealous but uninitiated proselyte in a full knowledge of the design, and qualify him for setting up as an expert propagandist.

description) the proceedings detailed in the subjoined paper took place. The Institution, however, wanted agitators¹, pageantry, and declamation to give it effect; and as far as appears from the Register of Auxiliary Contribution, published in the Parent Society's Report, its achievements have not been such as to procure its name to be recorded^m.

ⁱ *Agitators.* A corps diplomatique composed of all the intriguing spirits amongst the lower orders of the people, whose services Cromwell retained in constant requisition to keep alive and to inflame popular frenzy, and to regulate it in due subserviency to his designs. They were selected from those who had served as Serjeants and Corporals in the Rebel Army.

^m WILLOW WALK BIBLE ASSOCIATION.

May 19, 1812.

At a Meeting of several Friends to the British and Foreign Bible Society,

Mr. GEORGE GOODLUCK in the Chair,

Resolved I. That we form ourselves into an Association for the purpose of contributing toward the circulation of the Holy Scriptures, without note or comment, particularly among the poor of this neighbourhood; and that it be denominated the Willow Walk Bible Association.

II. That every Member of this Association subscribe not less than one penny a week: the contributions to be payable quarterly, monthly, or weekly, at the option of the subscriber.

III. That the Committee shall appoint a gratuitous Collector to receive the contributions, who shall pay the same to the Treasurer on the first of January, April, July, and October, respectively.

The Parochial Papers now follow in their order, in which all the defects of this first essay are abun-

IV. That a Treasurer, Secretary, and Committee, consisting of eight, be chosen from among the Subscribers annually.

V. That the Committee meet every second Monday in the month, at eight o'clock in the evening precisely ; and that three shall form a quorum.

VI. That every Subscriber have the privilege of presenting any family or individual in want of a Bible or Testament, to the Committee.

VII. The whole of the funds of this Association, whether arising from subscriptions, donations, or the sale of Bibles or Testaments, at prime cost, or reduced prices, shall, from time to time, be expended in the purchase of Bibles and Testaments, to be given or sold among the poor of this neighbourhood, until they shall be adequately supplied with the Holy Scriptures : in which case, the amount of future subscriptions and donations shall be remitted to the *British and Foreign Bible Society*, in aid of its benevolent designs.

VIII. That application be made by the Committee to the Committee of the *British and Foreign Bible Society*, for permission to lay out the funds of this Association in purchasing at the Depository of the said Society, Bibles and Testaments at the cost prices:

IX. That a General Meeting of the Subscribers be held annually, at the Society House, the second Monday in April: when the accounts shall be presented, the proceedings of the past year reported, and a Treasurer, Secretary, and eight Committee-men appointed.

X. That Mr. THOMAS BALLANCE, be Treasurer;
Mr. JOHN MEEK, Secretary;

dantly supplied, and the scheme is exhibited in perfection.

And Messrs. Charles Penny,	Messrs. Richard Green,
Thomas Clarke,	John Millie,
John Prince,	James Grinaway,
Geo. Goodluck,	William Benner,

Members of the Committee, for the year ensuing *.

XI. That subscriptions and donations be now entered into ; and that they be also received by the Treasurer, Secretary, and the Members of the Committee.

Any person disposed to forward the views of this Institution, may do so by applying at the place of meeting ; and at any of the under mentioned places, where books are kept for the purpose of taking such persons names down.

Mr. Thos. Ballance, Treas. 37, Steward-street, Spital-fields.

Mr. John Meek, Secretary, 4, Swan-yard, Shoreditch.

Mr. Millie, 1, Crab-tree-row, Hackney road.

Mr. Goodluck, Hoxton Town.

Mr. Richard Green, 14, Long-alley, Moorfields.

Mr. John Fox, 93, Bethnal-Green-road.

Mr. William Bonner, Hope Town.

* The parties concerned in this Association are chiefly journeymen weavers. The Treasurer being a master manufacturer of that fraternity ; the Chairman is a chimney-sweeper and old rag-merchant, and the only other member of the Committee yet undesignated is a dealer in old cloaths.

XVI.

Appeal to Mechanics, Labourers, and others, respecting Bible Associations.

“ The workmen wrought, and the work was perfected by them, and they set the house of God in his state, and strengthened it.”
—2 Chron. xxiv. 13.

THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY is a treasury, open to receive not only the gifts of the rich, but the mites of the poor. The widow of old, who of her want threw all that she had into the offerings of God, was said by our Saviour himself to have cast in more than all they that of their abundance had cast in much. Who then shall say, “ I am too poor to contribute any thing of value to so amazing a work as the publication of the Scriptures in every language, among every people under heaven ? ”—God sees the heart of every man, and judges its thoughts : he watches the motions of every hand, and records its deeds. If the heart be right towards him, the deeds of the hand, however few and small, will be accepted and sanctified. It is therefore *right* that the poor should lend unto the Lord, by bestowing on those who are poorer than themselves, that Book which may enrich them for ever.

It is right:—is it not *more* than right?—Is it not *necessary*, that every one, according to his ability, should minister in the service of God, the Author of all the good he ever had, or has, or hopes to have? Under the Law none approached the altar without a gift; the gifts were indeed proportioned to the circumstances of the parties; *but every one was required to bring a gift*. Oxen, and sheep, and goats were sacrificed by those who could afford them; but the most needy were not exempted from making some oblation. Have you not heard of a mother, who came to present her first-born Son in the temple of God? Too poor to furnish a lamb, she brought only a pair of doves for an atonement,—yet shall all generations call *her* blessed;—and that Son, whom at his birth she laid in a manger, was the Lord from heaven. O how did God honour poverty here? And how does he still honour poverty, by receiving and recompensing its meanest offerings! “Whosoever shall give you a cup of cold water to drink, in my name, verily he shall not lose his reward.” So said our Saviour concerning the gift of the poor to the poor—a cup of cold water to one of his disciples. Who then shall say, “It is not *necessary* for me to pinch any thing out of my pittance to relieve the wants of others?” Does our Saviour bless a cup of cold water, given for his sake, and hast thou not a cup to spare for thy brother, who is perishing for thirst?—When there was

a sore famine in Israel, God sent his prophet to ask bread of a poor widow, who had but a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse, and who was gathering two sticks, as she said, to dress it for herself and her son before they died of want. You know the story : she made a cake for the prophet *first*,—and did she repent of her generosity? No : none ever trusted in the Lord in vain.

But is it *practicable* for the poor to contribute effectually to the purposes of the Bible Society? Remember the saying of the Lord Jesus,—“ *It is more blessed to give than to receive.*” What, then : is the greater blessing reserved for the rich alone, and can the poor only enjoy the lesser?—God forbid ; the whole tenor of Scripture contradicts the supposition, that there is one higher blessing promised in any passage of it to the rich than to the poor. The poor therefore *may give* as well as *receive*, they *may* possess the *greater* as well as the *lesser blessing*. A labouring man, who can just support his family, may well afford a penny a week to a Bible Association, which will enable him, at the year’s end, to be the benefactor of a man poorer than himself, by presenting him with a gift more precious than all the treasures of the earth. If it be thus blessed *to receive a Bible*, how much more *to give one* !

The poor are as deeply interested in the success

of the Bible Society as any other class of people ;—and in the promotion of this great work, perhaps even **THEY CAN DO MORE THAN THE RICH.** How?—A penny a week subscribed by every poor person in this kingdom, who really could afford it out of his earnings without hurting his family ;—for how little food can a penny purchase!—would exceed, on a very moderate calculation, *half a million annually.* And who can *not* afford a penny a week for such a noble end ? Those only who are in the lowest state of famine, wretchedness, and disease :—among all others, *wherever* there is a *willing heart* there is *an able hand.* On these we call, not to confer an obligation upon the Bible Society, but to partake of its benefits by sharing its labour of love. We call upon *them to exercise a right,* and *to enjoy a privilege,* which belongs as well to them as to the rich. All that have may give, whether of their want or their abundance, and all may prove that *it is* more blessed to give than to receive.

When our Saviour opened his mission on earth, he read to his audience, from the prophecy of Isaiah,—“ The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor.” And who was this Preacher ? Our Lord Jesus Christ, “ who though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through

his poverty might be made rich."—And whom did he afterwards send to preach this Gospel to every creature? Poor fishermen, and others in the humblest ranks of life. Thus, in its commencement, was the Gospel preached not only *to* the poor, but *by* the poor, herein shewing its excellency above the philosophy of the heathen, which was confined to the learned, the rich, and the great, the common people being overlooked and despised as a profane herd.

To you then, ye Poor, is this Gospel sent; and if ye receive it, ye will be eager to send it forth to others. When ye have found it the power of God unto salvation in your own souls, ye will earnestly desire the salvation of the souls of your neighbours. And who are your neighbours? The poor throughout this land, and the poor throughout the world, who are yet strangers to God and his Truth. Come then, MEN AND BRETHREN, join hearts and hands with us. We are building the Church of God by the promulgation of his Word. In such a work, *what the greatest among us can do is little, and what the least DOES is something*; all shall receive their reward,—they that labour in the foundations as well as they that bring forth the headstone with shoutings, crying, "Grace, grace unto it!"

Here follows “ *Resolutions recommended for Adoption at Meetings assembled for the Formation of Bible Associations,*” the policy of providing which need not be pointed out ; nor is it requisite to incumber the publication with them, as they are the very outlines of those which will appear filled up with all the requisite specifications, App. No. XX.

XVII.

Address on Bible Associations.

TO a good man, there is nothing more delightful than to do good ; and those who possess the opportunity, and neglect to improve it, omit a positive duty. As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men. It is thus that we best imitate the God and Father of us all. The goodness of God we perceive in all his ways ; he considers all the sons of men as the children of his care : we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. It has pleased him, for wise ends, to place us in different situations ; but he has withheld from none of us the means of adding to the comfort of others. If there be an honest and pure heart, it will excite us to generous

actions. How many poor persons have cast in their mite at a charity sermon for the instruction of youth, or for the benefit of age ! And did they become poorer for the gift ; or could they ever repent of it ?

It is a great privilege to be able to feed the hungry ; but how much greater is the privilege, if we can direct those, that are hungering after righteousness, to Him who hath declared himself to be the Bread of Life ! Millions of human beings are ignorant of God, and have no knowledge of his revealed will. Would it not be a blessed thing to tell them, that they are the creatures of a Divine Hand, and must live in happiness or misery for ever ? Would it not be a noble act, to endeavour to raise them from a death of sin to a life of righteousness ; to seek out those who are as sheep going astray, and to bring them to the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls ?

Shall we ask, Who is sufficient for these things ? The answer is, That this privilege may belong to the poor. It was through the poverty of Jesus Christ, that many of us have been made rich—rich in the possession of his Gospel, in the enjoyment of his favour, and in the hope of immortality ; and by such acts of charity as our poverty can bestow, many may obtain those treasures, which no

moth can corrupt, and no thief can steal. Be merciful after your power. If you that have little do your diligence gladly to give of that little (although the sum should be only a penny a week), you may not only supply your poorer neighbours with a Bible, but may carry it even into distant countries ;—into countries devoted to idolatry, and immersed in darkness ; where innocent children are delivered, even by their parents, to crocodiles and beasts of prey ; where women, upon the death of their husbands, are burned alive : and the wretched enthusiast throws himself under the wheels of the machine which carries his god, that he may be crushed to pieces in honour of the idol ! Yet even upon these victims of superstition may the light of truth, through your charity, arise and shine : the wilderness and the solitary place may be glad for *you* ; you may cause the name of a Saviour to be heard, where now it is utterly unknown. Thus shall new songs of Sion ascend from those, who at this day have no heart to sing, and no feelings of devotion to be kindled into joy. And it will not be forgotten by them, that to *you*, as the instruments of heavenly mercy, is their gratitude owing. It will not be forgotten by the Father of mercies, that you did good with a willing mind. It will not be forgotten by Him, who commended the contribution of the poor widow, that *you* also of your want have thrown into the offerings of God—and he will bless the gift.

“ Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.” It is sweeter in the recollection ; it is more excellent in its effects. Even a cup of cold water, when given for his sake to a poor disciple, shall not lose its reward. Those, who upon Christian principles do good to others, enjoy in the present life a pleasure which the mere possession of wealth cannot confer. The benefits thus imparted shall be returned abundantly into their own bosoms, even in this world ; and will be followed by an exceeding great reward, when the earth and its glories shall have vanished away ^k.

^k The Editor has only evidence of the latter of the above two papers being circulated in the Hackney and Newington district ; but as the former is referred to in the latter, and as they are delivered in pairs at the Parent Society’s Repository in London, there can be no doubt of the minds of the poor in the above district having been perverted by both. To these papers, as sent forth from the above Repository, is appended a slip of paper, intimating that they are to be purchased elsewhere by all persons engaged in the formation of Auxiliary Societies, at the price of the printing and paper ; and it was very carefully stated to the Editor (who rather preferred obtaining his documents at the fountain head) by the Society’s agent who delivered them, that they are not printed at its charge, but are provided by a zealous friend of the Institution. Another appeal to the Poor, which is understood to be from the pen of Mr. Dealtry, also circulated in this district, and issued from the Society’s Repository, at the cost of the aforesaid nameless friend, will be found amongst the

The Method of conducting Bible Associations.

(For the Rules for forming Bible Associations, see an “*Appeal to Mechanics, Labourers, and others.*”)

Each Member of the Committee may associate with himself as many other persons as he conveniently can; some two; others three; and others four or more. Such Member of the Committee,

documents at the end of the volume, and, together with it, several other addresses to the same effect, the productions of other zealous and ingenious friends in different districts. They are brought together, that those concerned in the preservation of the peace of the country may be apprized of the work which is going on—that they may see that a new Holy Cause is at this time creating, precisely the counter-part of that which once plunged the country into Civil War, and deluged it with the best blood of its inhabitants—that they may be satisfied that the spells ministered to the poor to excite an enthusiasm amongst them in prosecution of it, are not *casual* and *local*, but *systematical* and *universal*—that they may judge for themselves what, in the ordinary course of human events, the catastrophe must be, unless means be promptly taken to arrest the frenzy in its progress, and to break the power of the incantation; and lastly, that they may consider, whilst something more profitable than self-reproach may result from the consideration, that the lower orders, if subjected to the operations of sophistry, which they have not the ability to unravel, will be much less chargeable with guilt, on account of the outrages which, under its impulse, they may commit, than those, who, having the guardianship over them, have not interposed to protect them from the delusion.

with his associates, would form a Sub-Committee : each Member of which Sub-Committee should engage to collect 1s. per week, by weekly contributions of one penny or upward each ; or 5s. per month, by monthly contributions of 1s. or upward each : or, if favourably circumstanced, he may collect in both ways, and to a larger extent than here specified.

As a Sub-Committee of about five persons will be found most convenient, the following scale is given to shew the great accumulation of funds which will arise from this division of labour.

Number of Persons, each associating with himself four others.	Number of Sub-Committees so formed.	Number of Persons in such Sub-Committees.	Yearly produce where each person collects 1s. per week.	Yearly produce where each person collects 5s. per Calendar month.	Yearly amount of both.
1	1	5	£. 13	£. 15	£. 28
2	2	10	26	30	56
3	3	15	39	45	84
4	4	20	52	60	112
5	5	25	65	75	140
10	10	50	130	150	280

And so on to any extent.

If one or more persons are disposed to assist the British and Foreign Bible Society, where no Association has been organised, their contributions may be remitted to the nearest Auxiliary Bible Society. Yet it is submitted that this will necessarily happen but very seldom, as even a few persons, willing to subscribe, may be able to establish an Association, by which means only they will become entitled to the privilege of purchasing the Scriptures at *Prime Cost*, from the Auxiliary Society to which they remit the collection.

Number of Persons.	Annual amount of rs. per week by each,	Annual amount of 5s. per month each.	Annual amount of both by each.
1	£.2 12 0	£.3 0 0	£.5 12 0
2	5 4 0	6 0 0	11 4 0
3	7 16 0	9 0 0	16 16 0
4	10 8 0	12 0 0	22 8 0
5	13 0 0	15 0 0	28 0 0
10	26 0 0	30 0 0	56 0 0

And so on to any extent.

XVIII.

Bible Association among the Poor, connected with the Hackney and Newington Auxiliary Bible Society.

IT is the earnest wish of many persons, that there should not be a family among their poorer neighbours which has not a Bible; and in performing this service, they are desirous of having the assistance of the Poor themselves. A subscription of a penny a week will make any benevolent person a Member of the Association, and Bibles and Testaments will be sold to the Members at the lowest prices.

The object of this Paper is to inform you of the design, and to ask you to promote it. — You will be so good, therefore, as to consider the subject, and to give an answer to the following QUESTIONS:—

Place for Answers.

How many Bibles or Testaments have you in your family, and how many are you in family?

Are you ready to join in supplying yourselves and others with the Word of God, by subscribing a Penny a Week?

Place for Answers.

A General Meeting will
 be held in July, to which
 you are invited : will you at-
 tend it?

*Your answer to the above enquiries will be called
 for.*

XIX.

BIBLE ASSOCIATION.

Rev. THOMAS SHEPPARD, M.A. in the Chair.

A Meeting will be held at the late Mr. Sandford's Brewery, Stoke Newington, on Monday next, the 5th of July, 1813, to establish a Bible Association for supplying the Poor in the district of Stoke-Newington, Newington-green, and Stamford-hill, with the Holy Scriptures, when the company of the neighbouring Poor is particularly requested.

The Chair will be taken punctually at a quarter before seven o'clock.

Seats will be provided for Ladies^a.

^a The Editor not having been able to procure a copy of the notice of the Kingsland Bible Association Meeting, which was the first, and to which the following Resolutions relate, has been obliged to print the second notice as his specimen.

XX.

Kingsland, Shacklewell, and Dalston Bible Association^a, President, James William Freshfield^b, Esq. Treasurer, George Roberts, Esq.^c.—At a numerous Meeting, held on Monday, the 14th of June, 1813, this Association was formed, and the following Resolutions were unanimously adopted as its Basis^d.

^a The three other Bible Associations into which, in conjunction with the above, the Auxiliary District of Hackney and Newington is divided, are the Stoke Newington, Newington Green, and Stamford Hill Association, the Clapton ditto, and the Hackney and Homerton. As the constituent code of each of them is in substance the same, with the exception of the last, in which appear only two, but those significant variations, the purposes of this publication will be answered by a single specimen; to the several resolutions of which whatever the Editor may deem it useful to observe on them will be appended.

^b It is due to Mr. Freshfield's perseverance in the cause of the Bible Society, unrivalled in this particular, to state, that though he appears attached specifically to this Association only, his zeal operated upon him as a retaining fee to engage his attendance as an advocate at the encœnia of the three other Sister Institutions; and that commencing his circuit, as above, at the Methodist Meeting at Kingsland, he closed it at the Independent Meeting in St. Thomas's-square, having pleaded in its behalf upon this extension of the Auxiliary design, at intermediate intervals, at the Brewhouse at Newington, and at the New Meeting at Clapton, reported to belong to the Sandemanian connection.

^c The Presidents to the three other Associations are the Rev. Thomas Sheppard, M. A. Thomas Furlley Forster,

I. THAT we form ourselves into an Association, for the purpose of contributing towards the

Esq. and Edward Forster, Esq. The Treasurers, Joseph Stonard, Esq. William Kent, Esq. and Joseph Goodhart, Esq. The names of these Gentlemen are recorded, as the reader will recognize in all of them persons with whom he is already acquainted, as Members of the Auxiliary Vice-Presidency and Committee.

^d The first of the variations adverted to (in Note a,) occurs in the *Hackney and Homerton* recital of this annunciation; and if it had been adopted on printing the Clapton Resolutions, the representation made would have been nearer the truth. The amended annunciation merely states, that "at a meeting held on such a day the following resolutions were adopted:" nothing is said of a "numerous" attendance, though, as Mr. Freshfield, to provoke contribution, stated in his speech, one moiety of the whole district, with respect to population, was comprized within the limits of *this* subdivision. The fact is, that in this association district the attendance was so very small as to amount to a compleat discomfiture, and that small attendance so much from curiosity, that though just previous to the business being concluded, the Chairman practised a *ruse de guerre* upon the company assembled, and carried a motion that the doors of the meeting-house should be closed, and that they should pass through the vestry, where he stated books to be ready to receive the names and subscriptions of those present; and though the managers were liberal, several pound notes being put into the plate, and many three-shilling pieces, yet the collection amounted only to 7l. 17s. 6d. The observation which here naturally suggests itself is, that it is only in those parts of the parish which are remote from the Church, and whose poor inhabitants are debarred from attendance upon its

circulation of the Holy Scriptures, without Note or Comment, particularly amongst the Poor of this Neighbourhood ; and that it be denominated, the “ KINGSLAND, SHACKLEWELL, and DALSTON ASSOCIATION.”

II. That the bounds * of this Society be on the North—Eden Nursery.

sacred services, that the association scheme has succeeded ; and how should it be otherwise, when the means are withheld from the regular Clergy of performing their sacred functions amongst them, and when sectarianism furnishes them with all the religious instruction which they receive.

* To the common reader, who looks no further for the reason of a thing than the statement set before him, this definition of boundaries must appear made with a precision which is a compleat burlesque upon the occasion of it.—He should therefore be informed, that beyond the object specified, it has reference to the new Geography of England, which the Bible Society is preparing, and is to be regarded as the elements of that statistical undertaking.—As the country at large are deeply interested in the progress of this work, inasmuch as the completion of it will introduce important changes *, and not improbably a new æra in

* The important changes here adverted to may very possibly antedate the full execution of these statistical arrangements, for the Puritans are great authority, and they risked their experiment when the preparatory work of Association had advanced no farther than to put a Home Circuit of seven Counties into their possession ; (viz. Middlesex, Kent, Surry, Sussex, Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire,) and by means of the resources which they drew from these, they completed their project of reformation.

West—Pall's Pond Turnpike, including the neighbourhood East of Newington Green.

South—The Northern boundary of the parish of Shoreditch in the Kingsland Road.

East—The Eastern extremities of Shacklewell and Dalston.

III. That every Member of this Association subscribe *not less* than one penny per week*^f.

our history, the Editor is happy to have it in his power to state, that in addition to the maps of single Auxiliary Districts, which are numerous, a connected delineation of the eight Auxiliary Districts of the metropolis is completed, as he has had the good fortune to procure an official copy, neatly engraved by C. Taylor, upon a scale of four inches to a mile, which appears to be rather the production of an engineer than a surveyor: as its title seems to intimate, not that it is an exemplification of districts already formed, but a "*plan* †" for the formation of them, and is thus an evidence of the concert, deliberation, and professional skill with which the work is carried on.

* Quarterly and annual, as well as weekly Subscriptions and Donations will be most thankfully received.

† This Resolution is framed from models of great authority, the most *recent* exemplification of which will be found in the financial system of the United Irishmen, where "funds were

† Title of the map. "*Plan of the Division of the Metropolis into Districts for Auxiliary Societies.*"

IV. That the general concerns of this Association be under the management of a President,

“ produced not only by the admission fees, loans, and contributions of the Aristocrats, but also by taxes of *one penny* per month, levied upon all individuals of the Association.” They however were only Plagiarists of the English Puritans; for it is stated by May (History of the Parliament, Lib. ii. Ch. v. p. 97), that “ for the support of the holy cause not only did the wealthiest citizens bring in their large bags and goblets, but the *poor sort* presented their *mites also*, inso- much that it was a common jeer of men disaffected to call it the Thimble and Bodkin Army.”

From a view of the speeches which three of the four Bible Association meetings have produced (with MSS. reports of which the Editor has been favoured from notes taken upon the spot) the *jugulum causæ* in the estimation of its managers was the passing this resolution; for to the persuading the poor to part with their pence the whole force of the eloquence of the different speakers was directed, and it must be admitted that their proficiency in the popular department of oratory—affecting examples—marvellous analogies—correctives to diffidence—appeals to pride—to compassion—and to unregulated religious feeling—have established their reputation as most able Missionaries to the multitude, to carry them away in their simplicity whithersoever they will *. But here again they must

* Lest the reader should suspect that the above description is the gratis dictum of the Editor, a few specimens of each of the flowers of eloquence are submitted. As samples of the first.—The stories of a boy diverted from his design of spending at Greenwich Fair sevenpence halfpenny, which he had been saving for that purpose, by seeing the notice that the sale of the Testaments at the District Repository was begun; and of his great disappointment on finding that what he had

Treasurer, three Secretaries, and a Committee, to be chosen annually.

yield the palm of originality to the Puritans, whose claim to the priority of invention Mr. Benjamin Calamy's speech, deli-

scraped together was not sufficient by three-halfpence to complete his purchase. Of a French prisoner depriving himself of two meals a week for the loan of the sacred volumes. Of a labourer forcing a shilling, in part of payment, upon a gentleman, who would have given him a Bible, that he might be able to say he had made some sacrifice for it. As samples of marvellous analogies.—The London Water-Works, the river Nile, and a specific for the plague, all of which, with great ingenuity, were made to furnish very apposite illustrations. As samples of the correctives to diffidence.—The case of Naaman's little Jewish maid being the instructress of her master where he would find a Prophet of the Lord who would cure him of his leprosy; which being a citation from Sacred History, where the person placed in an elevated station was a Heathen, and the person of low degree, one of the people of the Lord; excellently served the purpose for which it was stated to be adduced, of shewing the poor the superiority which very possibly belonged to them above those moving in a higher sphere, and therefore how much they were under mistake in supposing that they could be deemed intrusive in coming forward to contribute. The *secrecy*, moreover, which would be observed with respect to their contributions was neatly hinted to them by the citation of the case of Jehoiada the Priest, in the reign of Joash, whose expedient of placing a chest, with a hole bored in the lid of it, beside the altar to receive the offerings of those who were disposed to contribute towards the repair of the Temple, to make it applicable, was represented as done wholly to encourage the donations of the poor. As samples of the appeal to pride—the accurate statement of the amount of all the pence of the poor in the District, computed to be 1008l. and of the kingdom to be half a million. The intimation that the poor are the pride, the bulwark, and the glory of the nation, and therefore not to be the only persons excluded from co-operating in such an arduous undertaking; and then to touch this passion by the opposite string, that not so much their money as their promotion to honour by association with

V. That the Committee consist of thirty-four

vered at Guildhall, Oct. 6, 1643, together with the citation from Dugdale, will abundantly substantiate *.

nobles, &c. was the motive for urging them to enrol. As samples of the appeal to compassion—that it had been calculated that it would be 100 years before every poor person who wanted a Bible could be provided with one; that the Hindoos, and the Americans, and the Zealanders, and the cursed sons of Ham, were all hungering for Bibles,—making long journies for them as soon as they heard of their arrival in their country—running with tears in their eyes the moment they saw them—and putting them next their hearts as soon as they got them in their possession. Lastly, as samples of the appeal to religious feeling—the pleasure that must result to those belonging to a Society, whose motto was glory to God, &c. The gratitude due to our Saviour from the poor, who had so particularly noticed them, and therefore the last persons to be backward in circulating the Holy Scriptures. The preferable nature of a Bible to a cup of cold water, and therefore the greater reward to be expected as the heavenly recompense of the gift of it. But the finest touch upon the tender sensibilities was the description of a funeral—of the tolling-bell—of the yawning grave—the solemn procession—the cold remains of a departed sinner—which, by a fortunate coincidence, a long-practised Bible Society advocate met in his way to the Clapton Meeting, and worked up into a very moving representation, and brought home to the feelings of his auditors, by a comparison between their privileges whilst on earth and his, who could now only be a silent spectator of the performance of that pleasant task, in which they might actively co-operate, and which even Angels and Archangels were not permitted to enjoy.

* “ If ever, Gentlemen, you might use the speech of Bernardus Ochinus, *O happy penny!* you may use it now: *Happy money!* that will purchase Religion, and purchase a reformation to posterity! *O happy money!* and blessed be God that I have it to lend. I count it the greatest opportunity that God did ever offer to the Godly in this kingdom, to give them some money to lend to this cause: and I remember in this *Ordinance of Parliament*, it is called *advance money*.”

Members, chosen at the General Meeting, together with all the Collectors^g.

^g It is necessary here to call the reader's attention to Mr. Vansittart's përemptory assertion (see 1st Letter to Dr. Marsh) that "by the very constitution of the Bible Society, the Church *must* have a *constant* majority." It has been already stated, that the semblance of this guarantee is all that exists in the Auxiliary Committee, which contains only four persons of this description. This semblance, however, is preserved; for the seventh Resolution of that Society sets forth with the accustomed formality, that in conformity with the principles of the parent institution, half the Committee shall be members of the Established Church. But here the very semblance is laid aside, and in that department of the Insti-

"It is called an *ordnance to advance money towards the maintaining the Parliament forces*; and truly it is the highest advance of money to make money an instrument to advance my Religion. *The Lord, give you hearts to believe this!*"

When Mr. Freshfield, by his example of the Frenchman, insinuated the financial expedient of *sparing two meals a week* for raising the penny contribution, he was probably not aware that he was only adding another to the many instances of plagiarism from the Puritans, which have been already adduced. But if he will consult Dugdale's Short View of the Troubles, p. 119, he will there read to this effect: "But rather than their *blessed cause* (as they called it) should suffer, it was proposed, May 4th, 1643, by the Sub-committee at Sadler's Hall, in Bread-street, that all persons who were willing to promote their own safety should *spare one meal weekly*, towards the provision of horse and arms for the new raised *Auxiliaries* about London;" and he goes on to observe, that it is not unworthy of note, that this thrifty contrivance of *sparing one meal a week* was the usher to that then formidable imposition the Excise, upon which he proceeds to make some remarks, well deserving of attention.

VI. That the President, Treasurer, Secretaries, and three-fourths of the Members, who have most frequently attended the Committees, shall be eligible for the ensuing year.

VII. That the Committee shall meet once every month, or oftener, if necessary, on some day appointed by themselves.

VIII. That all the weekly Subscribers be formed into Classes, consisting of not more than twenty-four in each; that to each Class a Member be appointed Collector; and that he pay in the Sub-

tution which is the most populous, and accordingly here its Committees will be found, in many instances completely Sec-tarian *. Of the Committees of the four Bible Associations of the Hackney Auxiliary Districts, one, it is believed, is wholly composed of Dissenters, thirty-nine in number; another has one Churchman amongst seventeen of other persuasions; a third two among eleven; and the last, five or six amongst twelve; but here the personal application of the Lecturer of Newington was employed; one of the Churchmen, however, has retired in disgust, and others are retiring, convinced that the design in which they had too precipitately embarked, is of a very suspicious complexion.

* The Branch Society formed at Dedham, in Essex, the Editor is informed, is composed *altogether of Dissenters, without a single Churchman.*

scriptions to the Treasurer at every Committee Meeting^b.

^a This Resolution compleats the Auxiliary System, extending it to the lowest orders, providing for their complete organization, and thus making the whole Society "one and indivisible." It is no new device, as the Irish Union, distributing itself from National into Provincial Committees, and from Provincial into County, and from County into Baronial, and so at length terminating in individual Societies, is the model upon which it is formed. The whole work, moreover, of the Puritans was done by *Committees*, with which the whole kingdom was invested. "They were erected," says Echard (*History of England*, vol. ii. p. 388.) "of such men as were for the good cause, as they called it, who had authority from the Members of the two Houses at Westminster, to fine and imprison whom they pleased," and executed those commands with rigour and tyranny, "so as to harrass and oppress the country in a most arbitrary and scandalous manner." *The whole government of it*," Lord Clarendon (vol. iii. p. 72) informs us, "by their means got wholly into the hands of persons, who in the beginning of the Parliament were scarce ever heard of." Those not above the rank of ordinary constables seven years before, being advanced to Justices of the Peace, and to instance in one particular, "the town of Chelmsford, in Essex," as stated in *Mercurius Rusticus*, p. 30, "coming to be governed by a tinker, two cobblers, two tailors, and two pedlars." (See Willow Walk Association, p. 323.) It is important to observe, that in this lowest link of the chain of Association, which exceeds in compass all the rest, the Bible Society is to all intents and purposes a secret confederation, as the Editor has taken the utmost pains to obtain a copy of the muster-roll! and co-collectors have refused copies of their lists to one of their own body, whom

IX. That whenever any class exceeds the number of twenty-four, the surplus shall be formed into a new one, who, on completing their number, shall report their Collector as a Member of the Committeeⁱ.

they suspected not to be hearty in the cause; and it is literally true, that in the two districts most remote from the Church, where the measure has succeeded, the only lists which the Editor has been able to procure, are the lists of those who have become alive to the mischief, and in these are the names of several receiving parochial relief, and who are thus made to pay out of the Parochial Rates their penny contribution. To complete this exposè, the secret instructions given to the collectors should appear, and the second and third of them throw light upon the subject, which it is of consequence not to withhold.

1st. That they bring their books to every Committee Meeting, with the amount of subscriptions.

2d. That they enquire of the Subscribers, whether they are subscribing *in aid* of *this Association*, or paying for a Bible. Those paying for a Bible to be marked thus * before the name. (Query. What is the *sublime* distinction here intended?)

3d. That when such Bibles are paid for, they *persuade* them to become *Subscribers*.

Some idea may be formed of the productiveness of this measure, by the statement made at Spitalfield Church, by one of the declaimers, that the *penny* contribution in the Borough amounted *annually* to 3000l.

ⁱ This Resolution again is a modified transcript of one of the expedients of the Irish Union, as the following extract demonstrates, which exhibits a plan, the same in principle only differing in the time of separating the offset from the

X. That the Committee inquire of the Poor within the district, first, whether they possess the Scriptures, and in what condition ; secondly, if not, and yet are desirous of possessing them, whether they have the means, at once or by degrees, of purchasing them ; thirdly, if any, and how many of the family can read. Such information shall be entered in separate columns of a book provided for the purpose ; and in either of such cases, it shall be the duty of the Committee to furnish them by sale at reduced prices, or by gift, as they may think best, according to circumstances ; always preferring sale to gift, as being most likely to ensure the preservation of the books^k.

Parent Stock ; the Auxiliaries making the separation upon its first shoot, whilst the United Irishmen wait the period of its growing to maturity. “ When an individual Society amounted to thirty-six members, it was equally divided by lot, the first eighteen drawn by the Secretary, were considered the senior split, the remaining eighteen forming the junior split.”

See Acc. of Irish Union, Barruel's Proofs, Vol. 4, Notes, p. 3.

^k The other of those two significant variations adverted to, in Note a, which distinguishes the code of the Hackney and Homerton subdivision of the district, from that of the other three, occurs in this Resolution, which is completely recast upon this last occasion, and in its amended form, is to the following effect : “ That the Committee shall consider it to be their *primary* duty (query, *what is the secondary duty?*) to take measures for supplying the Poor with the Scriptures, so that,

XI. That the whole of the funds of this Association, whether arising from subscriptions, donations, or the sale of Bibles and Testaments, shall from time to time be expended in the purchase of Bibles and Testaments, to be sold or given among the Poor within the bounds of this Association, as before directed, until the whole be adequately supplied with the Holy Scriptures; in which case, the amount of future subscriptions and donations shall be remitted to the Hackney and Newington Auxiliary Bible Society, in aid of its benevolent designs¹.

if possible there may not remain a dwelling within the district, in which the Word of God is not found: that, for this purpose, such enquiries be made among the poor as the Committee shall judge convenient, and the results reported, and recorded on their minutes, and that the Committee shall direct supplies to be afforded, either by *gift* or *sale*, at *low prices*, as they may think best, always preferring sale to gift, where circumstances will allow it, as tending to enhance the estimation in which the Sacred Volume is held." By comparing this and the above original together, the partiality of the Auxiliarists towards the *Hackney and Homerton* subdivision of the district will appear very conspicuous. The motive to that partiality is this, that the resolution as it stood before would not furnish them even with a pretext for their association, and even in its amended form, the Editor believes it will scarcely do so, as it has been already stated that one of their own agents who distributed and collected again their inquisitorial paper, reported to them that he found one Bible at least in every family which he visited, and in many more than one.

The outline of this financial regulation is derived from the

XII. That application be made, by the Committee, to the Committee of the Hackney and Newington Auxiliary Bible Society, for permission to lay out the funds of this Association in purchasing, at the Depository of the said Society, Bibles and Testaments at the cost prices.

XIII. That the Members of the Committee of Hackney and Newington Auxiliary Bible Society have liberty to attend and vote at all meetings of this Association^m.

United Irishmen, whose *penny taxes* were transmitted through regular gradations to the High Superiors.

^m This and the following Resolution form one of the most important improvements upon the Willow Walk Association Paper. Meetings of the poor to enquire into the want of Bibles would soon grow vapid and die away if it were not for the attendance of declaimers to enliven them *; but this expedient again is derived from the Puritans; "so far, (says Bates, *Troubles*, Part I. p. 26.) was the Parliamentary dignity debased, that many times Members of the House of Commons came to the clubs of apprentices where they consulted about, related, and examined the affairs that passed in Parliament; what was designed to be done, what they were themselves to act, and when. Hence their tumults became, by this kind of schooling, in a manner to be regular, being distributed into

* If the reader will refer to *Collection of Documents*, No. iv. p. 406, he will see in that scientific production the importance attached to this "*stimulus*," and the repetition employed to enforce it.

XIV. That the Clergymen and Dissenting Ministers officiating in the district, be empowered to attend and vote at all meetings of this Society^a.

proper *classes* and *fraternities*, as of porters, watermen, taylors, &c. who under pretext of petitioning, at the least hint from their demagogues flocked together into bodies."

^a It is too well known what part the Lecturers had in the puritanical rebellion, every history of those troubles concurs in holding them up as the great incendiaries of the nation, not merely their sermon, but even their prayers, being employed to infuriate the people. With respect to the former, Dr. South's statement (Serm. Vol. I. p. 450.) delivered in the two following questions, with his own replies subjoined, is very much to the purpose: and with reference to the latter, an extract from Bates's View of Troubles, Pt. I. p. 134. is equally in point.

"How came such multitudes of our own nation, at the beginning of that monstrous (but still surviving and successful) rebellion in the year 1641, to be spunged of their plate and money, their rings and jewels, for the carrying on of the schismatical, dissenting, king-killing cause? Why, next to their own love of being cheated, it was the publick or rather prostitute faith of a company of faithless miscreants, that drew them in and deceived them. And how came so many thousands to fight and die in the same rebellion? Why ~~they~~ were deceived into it by those spiritual trumpeters who followed them with continual alarms of damnation if they did not venture life, fortune, and all, in that which, wickedly and devilishly, those impostors called the *cause of God*. So that I myself have heard one say (Colonel Axtell, whose quarters have since been hung about that city, where he first had been deceived) that he, with many more, went to that execrable war with such a *controuling horror upon their spirits, from those Sermons,*

XV. That a General Meeting of the Subscribers be held annually in June, when the accounts, as audited by the Committee, shall be presented ;

(he particularly mentioned those of Brooks and Calamy) that they *verily believed* they should have been *accursed by God* for ever, if they had not acted their part in that dismal tragedy, and heartily done *the devil's work*, being so effectually called and commanded to it in *God's name*." South's Serm. Vol. I. p. 450.

" We must know that these Sons of the Earth had great intimacy and correspondence with Heaven, as they pretended ; and when they were about to act any thing contrary to the Law of Nature, the Light of Reason, or the Laws of God and Man, they used to begin the work with prayers to Almighty God, in a doubtful manner proposing the case ; and the matter being first discussed between the Majesty of Heaven and themselves, they then, by turning and winding their prayers, shape an answer to their designs ; which like a divine oracle rendered to the praying inquirers, they impose upon the common soldiers as an article of faith, though the matter had been long before hatched in their thoughts : nor durst any man gainsay it who had not a mind to have his name dashed out of the roll of the saints. And hence it was that the people *dreaded their fasts and prayers, as ominous prodigies*." Bates's View of Troubles, Part I. p. 134.

It is curious to remark in Dugdale, that the fund out of which these preachers were supported was raised by the *purchase of inappropriate rectories* ; which were placed in the hands of trustees, who rewarded those enlisted in their cause in proportion to their exertions. The extract is so apposite to present times, that in justice to the reader the Editor could not suppress it, it will therefore be found in the Collection of Documents, No. V.

the proceedings of the past year reported ; and a President, Treasurer, three Secretaries, and a Committee appointed.

XVI. That James William Freshfield, Esq. be President.

XVII. That George Roberts, Esq. be Treasurer ; and that the Rev. John Campbell, G. G. Chambers, Esq. R. N. and Mr. William Casterton, be Secretaries.

XVIII. That Messrs. Joseph Allen, Barnett, Cowie, Fernie, Field, Flint, Forrester, Gandall, Garret, Godden, Goff, Gosling, Greenwood, Harford, Hocknell, Lindsay, Nattras, Parks, Parks, Jun. Parkinson, Porter, Reed, Robinson, Rutt, H. Sarson, Shoobert, Smith, Sundius, William Tayler, Thomas Tayler, Joseph Tayler, Turmain, Rev. Mr. Wall, Warman, Watson, and Willats, be members of the Committee for the year ensuing.

XIX. That the Committee now chosen have power to increase their number °.

° The summary of the Committees thus constituted, and of their several Meetings throughout the year is as follows. The executive body including the Auxiliary Committee, its four dependencies, and their respective officers form a corps of 130

- * Quarterly and Annual, as well as Weekly Subscriptions, will be most thankfully received.
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The Committee feel highly gratified by the support they have already received, and they solicit the help of *all* who can afford it; but while they acknowledge their satisfaction in offering to their poor neighbours an opportunity of co-operating in the important object of an extensive distribution of the Holy Scriptures, they would regret to receive assistance from any persons to whom the contributions might be inconvenient.

resident members, who are to assemble at five General Meetings, when the whole of their constituents are invited to attend, and at 60 Committee Meetings; and this *immense incorporation*, and these *numerous sittings*, are *professedly* for no other purpose than to *supply the Poor of this district with Bibles !!!* A spirit of deep sleep indeed, must have fallen upon the nation, if it cannot see through such a glaring deception as this; if it cannot awaken itself to the immense accession of strength which any party must acquire by being so constantly embodied; or can remain insensible to the existence of designs beyond those obtruded upon public view, when the means are so out of all proportion excessive to what can possibly be employed in the execution of what is *professedly* undertaken. See Professor Marsh's Reply to the Dean of Carlisle's Strictures, p. 136.

Subscriptions and donations will be received by the Treasurer, the Secretaries, the Members of the Committee, and the Master of the Day and Sunday School, at the School Room, Kingsland Road.

THE Editor has now completed the task in which Mr. Freshfield laid him under an obligation to engage, and he persuades himself that he has at least placed the tendency and the proceedings of the Bible Society in a sufficiently questionable point of view, to justify himself and his brethren in the decided part which they have taken in withstanding the attempts of its agents to entail the parish of Hackney in the trammels of that Institution.

This was his *primary* duty, a duty which, in justice to himself and his clerical brethren, he felt himself under an imperious obligation to discharge, that he might rescue his own and their characters from obloquy and misrepresentation; and, as he has already intimated, in his introduction, this comprized, in the outset of his labours, the whole of his design. But the subject opened upon him as he proceeded, its general and momentous import acquired, moreover, continually additional hold upon

his mind, and he now hopes that he has done *much more* than what he *originally* intended—he hopes he has made out such a case as will excite a *general* jealousy of the immense incorporation which is now taking place, so preposterously excessive in comparison of the object, to the attainment of which it professes itself exclusively devoted; and of the political ascendancy which it is acquiring. He hopes, moreover, that he has fixed the public attention to the instructive records of a former period of our History, when Religion was made the pretext for the darkest designs, and when a frenzy of reformation, rendered as contagious as a pestilence, by the strong delusions of visionary and designing men, prevailed for a season over the quiet good sense of Englishmen, and hurried them from one wickedness to another; till the kingdom was degraded to its ancient barbarism, and became the victim of the capricious tyranny and insatiable avarice of the most abandoned of its inhabitants, and the prolific parent of every species of apostacy from God.

Should this last mentioned object of his labours have been, in any degree, attained, he would especially direct the attention of the reader to the solemn League and Covenant which was *virtually* entered into by the English Parliament in May, 1641, when its “harbinger; the Protestation” was taken,

and was immediately pressed upon the country at large by all the agents, whose services the faction; which brought it forward, could command, and by all the motives which subtlety could suggest, or the inconsiderable power which they had then acquired, enabled them to apply. For though between the *specific object* of this and the Bible Society confederation a difference may appear, they will be found upon examination to be, *in spirit* and *in operation*, the very counterparts of each other; the pretext for each of them being the redress of imaginary religious grievances; and the establishment and maintenance of Christianity in, what the popular enthusiasts of the day have been pleased to set forth as, evangelical purity and perfection.

If a comparison be instituted between these bonds of union, it will be found that the former provided, as amply and as explicitly as the latter professes to do, for the security of the Established Church; in-somuch that Walker ^a states, that the taking of it was no sooner proposed in Parliament than it was acceded to by all the Members of both Houses, with the exception of two of the Lords, “ those who wished well to the Church (even the *Bishops*) imagining that they had effectually defeated the new Reformers in the project against it which they had

in hand," and had absolutely obtained from them a public and solemn engagement for its security. But it will be found also, that nothing less was intended in either instance by the founders of the confederacy, for with respect to the Protestation, no sooner had it received that almost unanimous Parliamentary sanction which was indispensable to give it the currency required, than those who framed it, regardless of their oath, published an interpretation of it by which they declared "the worship, discipline, government, rites, and ceremonies of the Church" excluded from the guarantee; and though no authoritative comment to the same effect has yet been promulgated by the Bible Society upon their constitution; yet in Sermons and at public Meetings, individuals make no hesitation in declaring that the overthrow of the Establishment is at the bottom of its design ^b.

^b The following important statement, testifying specifically to the same effect as the many other facts adduced in the course of the preceding pages to awaken public jealousy at the proceedings of the Bible Society, has just been transmitted to the Editor from a distinguished Dignitary of the Church, who states it to be "in substance derived from memoranda taken at the time."

In the month of August, 1810, I was at Birmingham. One Sunday afternoon, I attended at a meeting-house, which I was induced to go in quest of, from having just before met with a pamphlet published by the dissenting teacher to whom it belonged, which, though containing opinions I did not assent to, appeared to me to be written with a good deal of ability,

It will be found, moreover, that the operation of the two expedients is the same, and is alike condu-

He expounded extempore on Rev. xviii. 1—5, compared with xvii. 5. 6, &c. His discourse was exceedingly controversial and inflammatory; and unprofitable in the highest degree to such a congregation as his, consisting of the lowest orders. Interpreters, he said, had disputed what Babylon meant. There had been a great consent among many of them, that the name and the attributes here given to it, belonged to the Church of Rome—and so they did; but they went a great deal further; they applied to *all Churches*, especially all *Established Churches*, and among the rest to *our own*.

He enlarged very much on the characteristic of Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots, being MYSTERY, under which title he brought in (in a steady proud spirit of invective) the *Sacraments* both of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; all *Creeds*, *Confessions*, and *Articles of Faith*; all *Church Authority*; every thing that related to an Establishment of Religion, the Clerical profession, &c. illustrating all the way his observations by appealing to our own Church Establishment, its Ordinances, Clergy, &c. &c. their persecutions, usurpations over conscience, &c. &c.

Well! but Babylon was to fall (Chap. xviii. 2), all things were to be swept away*—And how was this to be effected? You have all heard much of late of the BIBLE SOCIETY. Here, and in all parts of the kingdom, you and I have taken part in its proceedings, through our recommendation of it, and our

* “ With respect to the Sacraments, I did not clearly make out whether his threat was directed against them altogether, or merely against the administration of them, and the ceremonies with which they are accompanied in the Church of England and in other assemblies of Christians; but the latter, I rather believe, was the thing intended.” (Explanatory passage, extracted from a subsequent Letter.)

give to the success of such a conspiracy—that if, for instance, the alledged emergency to provide for which the Protestation was stated to be sent forth, was “a public suggestion that the Church of England, in some parts of her constitution, was Popish”—the popular war-hoop against her in that day; no less is the pretext of the Bible Society’s Auxiliary proceedings a broad insinuation of her inefficiency, and indeed uselessness as a religious institution—the clamour by which she is now assailed and bereaved of the affections of her children. That, if another end answered by the Protestation was that

patronage, and we *did well*—for it is THAT SOCIETY, *through the circulation of the PURE WORD OF GOD, that is destined to cause Babylon, and her mysteries, and her persecutions to fall. Not one of a thousand of the good men, who have taken part in these proceedings, sees whither they are tending—for if they did* (says he) *instead of being ITS ARDENT FRIENDS, as we have seen, they would be ITS MOST DETERMINED FOES. But they are fighting the Lord’s battles—and in His hands are preparing their own downfall. Fear not, ye little flock, the voice of prophecy will be accomplished—Mysteries, Sacraments, Confessions of Religion will be no more.*

The discourse was long—with a great degree of steady animation and confidence about it: and the proud spirit of the speaker, haranguing a congregation of not more than three hundred people of the lowest order, displayed itself, especially in the latter part, where he shewed that *the thousands of whom he spake (alluding to the Members of the Church of England especially) did not see that they WERE WORKING THEIR OWN UNDOING.*

in the country the taking or refusing of it acted as “ a plain and visible note of distinction by which the puritanical faction discovered their friends from their foes, and the respective strength of either party ;” no less does the domiciliary visitation, enrolment, and military organization, even down to companies of twenty-four men each, which the Bible Society are now so assiduously pressing forward, convey to our modern reformers the same intimation.—And that if, lastly, the Protestation whilst it consolidated and organised the enemies of the Church, spread perplexity and disunion amongst its friends, “ many who meant no harm being drawn into it” by its specious plausibility^c, and then wanting the energy requisite to extricate themselves ; in no respect is the Bible Society so banefully efficacious ; and though it is not armed, like the Protestation, with the entanglement of an oath, yet it has a certain glossing influence by which, as that profound observer of men and things the late Bishop of London remarks, “ it palliates from time to time the evil gradually creeping on so as to prevent its ap-

^c These things being contrived and carried on between the factious Scots and English, those who took that Covenant with an honest purpose, as many good men did, being won over by fear, delusion, or false hope, called themselves *Presbyterians*. Other factions of less note, as *Independants*, *Anabaptists*, and other *Fanatics*, not disdaining to list themselves in the same cause. Bates's Troubles of England, Part I. p. 61.

pearing to every one in its true colours till it becomes difficult or too late to remedy it, and till even secession will be without advantage, the dissenting party having made all the use of Churchmen which their purposes require, and having by their assistance gained the ascendancy." (Letter to the Clergy of Colchester.)

Here the comparative survey must be suspended for the Bible Society has not yet had its perfect work. But the catastrophe of the Puritanical attempts at reformation is well known, and if the Protestation be traced to the close of its career, after that it had merged into the Solemn League and Covenant, and invigorated by this improved republication had done its utmost towards the accomplishment of its designs; it will be found that all the crime, and all the misery that ensued were referred back to it as their original; and as the most decisive testimony of the guiltiness imputed to it, and of the execration in which it was held, no sooner had government resumed its functions, and discharged its first duty upon those personally concerned in the murder of the King, than the Parliament of the three kingdoms brought it, as the next capital culprit, before them, and consigned it to be burnt by the hands of the common hangman, "as the bond," says Bates, "of English and Scottish conspiracy—the Sacrament of Presbyterian villainy."

“ Thus,” he continues, “ it expiated at length by its own ashes the wickedness of three nations.” Into the equivalence of which expiation to the enormities for which it is here stated to have atoned, it is not to the present purpose to inquire ; but no question can more seasonably be raised out of it, than whether the kingdom shall incur the hazard of being again reduced to such circumstances, as to have this miserable retribution left to it as the only means of venting its indignation for the wrongs it shall sustain—wrongs at which the ear of every one who heareth them must tingle, and which, were the ominous tendencies of the Bible Society towards the dreadful catastrophe but surveyed with half the attention which their menacing aspect demands, would raise up and combine into a phalanx every individual in this kingdom, to whom either the interests of the Church of England, or the public tranquillity were objects of real concern, for the purpose of placing themselves in such a posture of defence as would effectually overawe the restless spirits confederated in the Institution, or ensure their discomfiture should they persist in pushing forward the accomplishment of their designs.

It is to this question, the Editor repeats it, that his chief purpose is to fix the reader’s attention. Is the *immediate object* of the Bible Society, (i. e. the circulation of the Scripture *without note or comment*) so unequivocally and unmingledly good ; is it

Its favorite appeals in this behalf are to its *Foreign* achievements—the grand display emolazoned upon

he says, “ to determine a matter of fact,” (“ *the production of an indefinite diffusion of heavenly knowledge by the issue of 325,000 copies of the Scriptures from the Bible Society’s Depository in London,*” the conclusion which they they draw per saltum from these premises) “ by at best a very doubtful expectancy ; let us take this question a little below the surface, and we apprehend the true secret of “ producing a diffusion of knowledge,” is not merely to multiply *books*, but to procure them *readers*. Let us then try the question in the great Continent of Asia, which has opened the widest field to the exertions of this Society. They have taken good care to enumerate *fifteen of the Oriental languages*, into which they have procured the Scriptures to be translated. May we then beg to be informed, whether they have succeeded in making *fifteen proselytes*, in any of those districts where those languages are spoken, and the Bible is now rendered intelligible? Until vouchsafed some satisfactory intelligence on this point, I must beg leave to question, whether the calculations of this Society are not merely premature, but vain and deceitful. To adopt any other conclusion on this subject, involves an absurdity, which it would be a waste of time to employ a moment in refuting, that every people, among whom the Scriptures are *translated and published*, become *converts to Christianity*, or, what is in substance the same, that every one who *receives a book* becomes very *learned in its contents*, and highly *improved by its doctrine*.”

In notes upon this passage, Mr. N. supports the sceptical opinions, which he maintains, by the testimony of Mr. Kolhoff, Mr. Horst, and Mr. Pohle, the Missionaries of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge in the East Indies, and their testimony is very much in point. The two former inform the Society, that “ *the progress of Christianity, and the conversion*

the annual report of its proceedings being the great things which it has accomplished *abroad*. The late Bishop of London, who was not in the habit of making gratuitous accusations, gave it under his hand to the Clergy of Colchester, "that he looked " on these accounts with much *doubt* and *suspicion*," and Professor Marsh has so compleatly detected the *infidelity* of these narratives in one leading particular^e, that not only has no *attempt* been made to repel the charge, but their guilt in this respect has actually been *admitted* in the very *front* of the Society's most *recent vindication*^f.

of the Heathens, resident at a distance from any of their congregations, have obliged them *to increase* the number of their native *teachers*; and the latter, after expressing his grateful thanks for the annual stores and presents just received from the Society, breaks out into this fervent exclamation, "Would to God that we could also receive *new Missionaries*! I am now upwards of 66 years old; my strength faileth me, and I may soon be gone, and *the Mission be an unprovided-for orphan*, whereof to think only is painful to me." (Account of Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, for 1811, p. 182, 194.) The complaint here, says Mr. Nolan, is not of want of *Bibles*, but of *persons to teach it*." Objections of a Churchman, p. 12.

^e See p. 161, 162, and p. 181, note k, where these pretensions are investigated.

^f "In the ensuing work no notice is taken of Dr. Marsh's History of Translations of the Scriptures. Lest, therefore, any of his friends should consider the omission as a proof that

The only satisfactory evidence then of the Society having redeemed the pledge for which it has

his arguments on this subject are unanswerable, it may be proper to observe, that *the facts which he has stated, supposing them all true*, are of no consequence in the present controversy. If, by the exertions of the Society, copies of the Scriptures, in various languages, abound where formerly they were not to be procured at all, or not without great difficulty and expence, I am not anxious to be informed whether this inestimable improvement has been produced by printing new, or by reprinting old translations." (Advertisement prefixed to the Dean of Carlisle's Strictures, &c.) In order to appreciate the success of this attempt to parry Professor Marsh's home thrust at the credit of the Bible Society, the assumption at which it was directed, should be brought back to the reader's recollection. It was contained in Mr. Vansittart's Reply to his Address, &c. and was to this effect: "That the Bible Society has done *more* for the diffusion of Christianity, than has been effected in the same space of time in any age since the Apostolic," having, "in seven years, been the means of *preaching the Gospel* in *fifty-four* languages." In Mr. Clarkson's Letter, printed in the Ipswich Journal of Nov. 23, 1811, which is to this effect: that the Society had "*translated the Scriptures into no less than forty-three* different languages or dialects." And in Mr. Hardy's Speech, at Leeds, (printed in the Cambridge Chronicle, Nov. 29, 1811, and now circulated, as one specimen, in its Collection of Hints to Bible Society Orators, from its repository in London, from which the Editor obtained it six weeks ago) which is to this effect: "that the Scriptures have already been *translated into more than thirty languages*; and by the blessing of Providence on the labours of those employed, Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, Pontus, and Asia, strangers of Rome, Jews

made itself so largely responsible, must be the demonstration of advances made *at home*, by its influence and instrumentality, towards general reformation. And even waiving for a moment the above impeachment of its fidelity in reporting its *foreign* progress; the natural course to be taken in raising a title to credibility for its achievements *abroad*, is to found that title upon the proofs exhibited of the success of its *domestic* exertions, as it must be on all hands admitted that the inhabitants of *this* kingdom are in a better state of preparation for the profiting by its labours than the victims either of *Heathenism or Superstition*; and that *here* the Society enjoys facilities for ensuring to itself success, to which those *elsewhere* furnished bear no degree of proportion.

The *reasonable* demand then, which the Bible Society has to satisfy, is that now *publicly* made to it for the production of its *domestic demonstrations*—if these demonstrations exist, the challenge will be easily answered, for its doings have not been done in a corner, but stages have been erected in all the chief places of concourse, and agents, more numerous than the whole phalanx of public functionaries, have been employed to give publicity to

and Proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, may hear in their own tongue the wonderful works of God.”

its performances, and to insinuate them from house to house into the affections of the people ; so that if they are powerful in their operation, in *kind* as well as degree, in the least approaching to the extent which its arrogations set forth ; as far as this kingdom is concerned, it must have made some considerable progress in the fulfilment of the predicted final triumph of the Gospel—in the “ filling of our land with the *knowledge of the Lord* as the waters cover the sea.”

Let the æra then of its commencement and the present period be compared, and let every competent and impartial observer of this busy decad of years decide which have been most productive within the season, the *tares* of the *enemy*, or the *good seed* of the *Son of Man* ? It is without any hesitation maintained, that the former have gained ground with a luxuriancy that cannot escape observation ; and it is maintained further, that the baneful influence of that Institution would have spread much more extensively the religious indifference which it has engendered, had it not been for the ability, the promptitude, the indefatigable perseverance, and the public spirit with which its aggressions have been withstood, and its sophistries exposed, by that portion of the Members of the Establishment, both laity and Clergy, who, alive to this most imposing delusion, have devoted themselves to the preserva-

tion of that purest and best reformed part of Christ's Holy Catholic Church, which it is the distinguished beatitude of these dominions to contain.

There would be no difficulty, the Editor is persuaded, to establish by the induction of particulars all that is above imputed, as well with respect to moral depravity^h as to spiritual wickedness—but his appeal is to Churchmen; and if the state of Religion in this country, as far as the Establishment is concerned, is at this moment thus far deteriorated beyond what it was ten years ago, that *bitterness of hostility* towards it in the *enemies* of the Churchⁱ,

^h The murders committed within the period have been both more in number, and more horrid in the circumstances attending them, than have disgraced the annals of the kingdom for a long series of years; and they have further been characterized by these two *peculiarities*, that the perpetrators of them, in very many instances, have either, under the influence of *despair*, attempted to elude the execution of justice by laying *violent hands upon themselves*, or inflated with *presumption*, have hailed the *instrument of death* with *raptures*, deeming themselves *saints and confessors*, and professing the *fullest assurance* of salvation.

ⁱ This point is excellently opened by Mr. Nolan, in the following apposite questions, followed up by the reference to a fact, which speaks for itself, and is decisive.

“ While we are amused with these fair appearances, and still fairer professions, do we find any abatement in their hos-

and an *indifference* amongst its *friends*, are both greatly encreased—if Churchmen are more *divided*

tile designs on the Establishment? Is there one of those *emissaries* whom they disperse through the rules of its Spiritual Governors, withdrawn from the work of *undermining* its foundation: is there one of those *productions*, charged with matter the most dangerous and pernicious, withheld from the work of *plotting* its destruction? Has one of those *altars* been removed which have been raised against *its* altars; or *one* of those members restored which they have torn from *a* body, that they have now *severed* and *disunited*? Within the memorable lustrum in which this Society has been formed, we have witnessed a slight stand made, to repress their alarming encroachments on the Church, and to restrain them in practices, which have since proved to be as illegal as they were dangerous. But we do not forget the petitions which were poured forth by the whole body, and the clamorous importunity with which they beset the Legislature, to acknowledge, as their *natural right*, the liberty which they *assumed*, as much in *defiance of justice as law*, to trample down every thing which we prize under that name." Objections, &c. p. 54.

Nor should we forget either, the Editor subjoins, the proceedings at Pancras, at the close of the last and the beginning of the present year, to defeat the very *reasonable* endeavour of the Vicar to procure an Act for the erection of a new Parish Church, the present not accommodating above *three hundred* of his parishioners, whilst the population is near *fifty thousand*. These facts speak so decidedly to the point as to supersede all further appeal—the opposition in the last instance having been marked with characters of virulence and rancour, which perhaps were never before exhibited in a Christian country.

amongst themselves, whilst Dissenters, from being divided, are become *closely confederated* together, then is the whole case made out which it is to his present purpose to establish; and that these fea-

In addition to the above, another painful instance of very recent date may be recorded; for nothing can more strikingly exemplify the *malignant spirit* which has gone forth, than the comments which have been publicly made upon the sudden death of the Bishop of London, whose valuable qualities have been made daily more and more conspicuous, and who has been gaining continually upon the affections of his Clergy to the last hour of his existence, and has been lamented by them, since his decease, with the strongest expressions of an almost unanimous regret. (See Advertisement prefixed to Archdeacon Jefferson's Charge, just published.) Such testimony as this, in common times, would have restrained the tongue of slander from the emission of its venom upon his memory; but a newspaper, which the Editor is sorry not to be able to specify, notifying the event as an awful visitation, so far outraged common humanity, as to remark upon it to this effect: that "*it is the practice of the Almighty, when he has great designs in view, to begin by the removal of obstacles.*" Nay, a friend of the Editor's, led by curiosity into a large Meeting at the outskirts of the Metropolis the Sunday after this public loss was sustained, heard a thanksgiving offered up to God for the destruction of enemies, expressed in such terms as immediately conveyed the impression to his mind, that a splenetic exultation upon this distinguished Prelate's removal was the *pious* effusion pronounced; and another friend was distinctly told by a zealous female partizan, that it was a great mercy in God to take away such a persecutor of his people. The proficient in Puritanical History will at once know the generation to which these Religionists belong!

tures do mark the present period far more characteristically than when the Bible Society commenced its spiritual cultivation, and that by its instrumentality the sad change has been produced, is made public boast of by experienced adepts at its anniversary celebrations, and therefore does not require any recapitulation of evidence for its justification ^b.

Having tried the Bible Society then by its practical results, and found those to be such as to the considerate Churchmen can only be subjects of the most importunate deprecation, there is this further ordeal to which it may be submitted—the taking a speculative survey of its pretensions, and enquiring, whether there is not strong ground of presumption that those results are rather necessary than contingent, and such as, due respect being had to the allegations and ruled cases of Scripture, previous consideration should lead any one to anticipate. This is not the place for entering at length into this argument; it is therefore merely touched upon; but in the very questionable shape in which the whole concern must now appear at the close of this laborious investigation, the Editor is disposed to hope that, in order to produce the conviction which he desires, it may not be deemed necessary

^b See p. 96, Note p.

that he should alledge that, which amounts to compleat demonstration.

To survey then, in the first place, the *professed object* of the Bible Society; that *distinctively* is not the circulation of the *Bible*, but the circulation of it *without Note or Comment*. It is not what it *imparts*, but what it *withholds*, that *characterizes* the Institution. Nay, its involution of character is so exquisitely skilful that the full idea of it is not yet conveyed; for besides what it *withholds*, what it *imperceptibly insinuates* enters into its mystical composition. The Scriptures indeed, by the *preliminary filtration* which they are made to undergo, come into this vast reservoir, prepared for their general diffusion, *purified* from that *particular* tincture which they have received, as well from those who interpret them according to the *truth*, as from those who *corrupt* them according to their *various imaginations*: but they are not emitted in this *purity* to those to whom this splendid receptacle dispenses them again; for, in consequence of the *various strata* of which its channel is composed, they undergo a sort of *chemical process* within it, by which they are impregnated with all those tinctures *conjointly* in their most *subtle* and least *detectable* forms with which before they were *separately* coloured; and the truth is annihilated by the overpowering evaporations of

error^k. Now, in that last and most contentious period of the Jewish history, which the Gospel contains, a religious fraternity are brought prominently forward, who were in as complete possession of public estimation as the Bible Society ever was, even in the zenith of its popularity, and who had adopted and carried into full effect this *expurgatory* regulation. The Pharisees are the fraternity referred to, and the analogous principle of their policy is that they "took away the key of knowledge;" i.e. the *true interpretation*^l of their Sacred Writings,

^k "In joining them (the Dissenters) in any scheme when the latter (the Ministry, or notes and comments, for in the one the other is included) is not merely overlooked, but the former (the Bible) deemed *exclusively* adequate, we *virtually* abandon *our own* principles, and add *our* sanction to *their's*." Nolan's Object. &c. p. 45.

^l Luke xi. 52. Grotius notes upon this passage, "*Vetus quidam annotator ἡγάγετο exposuerat ἐκφύλαττε, non male, quod et in textum alicubi penetravit. Clavim autem Tertullianus recte exponit interpretationem Scripturarum. Et mos erat apud Hebræos, cum cui potestas dabatur Legem et Prophetas interpretandi, clave datâ, quasi in possessionem muneris mittere.*"

Wilson, in his Christian Dictionary, in explanation of this passage, says, "The sense of Scripture is as it were locked up, till it be opened by wise and sound interpretation, which is *the key of knowledge*." Besides Tertullian cited by Grotius above, he cites St. Chrysostom and Jerome as thus explaining the phrase. Pople also coincides in this construction.

in which that witness which they bore to the Messiah and to his dispensation was set forth. The expedient then is brought before us in the very narrative of our Lord's ministry upon earth; nay, it is He himself who introduces it to our notice, and He introduces it only for the purpose of denouncing a woe against those who had contrived so subtle a device, and both exposes the corrupt motives in which it originated—that its inventors might without detection “teach for doctrines the commandments of men” (Mat. xv. 9), and make the commandment of God of none effect by their tradition (Mat. xv. 6); and also admonishes its self-deluded votaries of its mischievous effects, that it at once indisposed them from entering themselves into the kingdom of Heaven, and involved them in the further guilt of hindering those from entering in, who were otherwise well disposed to sue for admission. (Luke xi. 52.)

But when our Saviour thus condemned it, it had not filled up the measure of its iniquity; it had not betrayed the misguided multitude into the “denying the Holy One and the Just; into the desiring a murderer might be released unto them in his stead; into the killing the Prince of Life,” (Acts iii. 14, 15.) and into the invoking his blood upon themselves and their posterity.—(Mat. xxvii. 25.) These, however, followed in the train of dreadful consequences, for which it must render an account; for

St. Luke is express in his declaration, (Acts xiii. 27.) that into this complication of wickedness, "the inhabitants of Jerusalem and their Rulers" were infatuated, "because they *knew not the voices of the Prophets* which were" yet "*read to them every Sabbath-day,*"—because, though supplied in *due* portions with the *text* of Scripture, the *key of knowledge* which would have opened its *true interpretation* to their minds, had been surreptitiously taken away, and thus, as the Inspired Historian continues, "they fulfilled these Prophecies in condemning Him."

A more impressive demonstration than this of the reprobate state of mind to which the expedient of separating the sacred text from its *true* "interpretation, criticism, and comment," has so fatal a tendency to reduce those who adopt it, and of the despatch against the Spirit of Grace which will too probably ensue, placed as it is upon the pages of the Sacred Volume which was thus made the ruin of those which it was designed to save, could not surely have been prepared to act as a preservative upon Christians, effectually to prevent them from stripping it again to "*that simple state,*" and "presenting it," thus unprotected from injury and insult, "as an object of universal circulation." (Sketch of the Designs of the Bible Society pasted on a Sheet.)

But the survey may be continued, and the mischievous results of the expedient brought nearer home to ourselves; for our Saviour foresaw that the perverse propensity was not so effectually corrected, but that it would revive again; that in the vicissitudes of his Church when consigned to his newly chosen, no less than under the conduct of his ancient people, times would recur, when men would not endure *sound* doctrine, when they would turn away their ears from the *truth*, and would be turned unto *fables*, and that then the same designs against the *key of knowledge* would be suggested and entertained; the same *surreptitious removal* of it take effect, and the same *infatuation*, *guilt*, and *misery* ensue. As therefore it had been predicted of himself, not merely that "he should be led as a lamb to the slaughter;" but that his own people, who should lead him thither, *self-excluded* from the *true* intent of the prediction, should "esteem him smitten of *God*," and *themselves* consequently the *executioners* of Divine vengeance against him; so did he forewarn his Apostles and their successors, not merely that like himself they should be exposed to persecutions and to death, but that "times should come upon them when whosoever *killed* them would *think* he was doing *God* service," (John xvi. 2.); would persuade himself with the same *full assurance* that St. Paul did with respect to the Law, (Acts xxii. 3, 4.) that he was *actuated by zeal* for the Gospel, and

with all the *solemnity* of Caiaphas would rend his clothes, (Mat. xxvi. 65.) and *pronounce* that they had spoken *blasphemy*, when like their Master they were bearing witness to the *truth*, and would, from the *seat of Judgement*, sentence them to execution.

All this accordingly has been brought to pass; and, to confine the appeal made in exemplification of it, to the transactions of this kingdom, in the Solemn League and Covenant, and in the pillage and slaughter of Christ's faithful servants, which that bond of iniquity both legalized and ushered in, is exhibited its abundant completion. The confederacy formed by means of this instrument of delusion, was, with the exception only of the name, a Bible Society^m. The Bible and the Bible *only* was the

^m Dr. Milner, at p. 142, laments (says Professor Marsh) "that a Bible Society was not formed in the time of Charles I. Now there was a Bible Society formed in the reign of Charles I. (rejoins the Professor) and it comprised all the Puritans in the kingdom. I have got a *print* of it, of which I gave an account in a preceding Chapter." Referring to this Chapter, the account will be found as follows: "The *print* consists of three figures; the figure of a Puritan with a *Bible* in his hand; the figure of an English Bishop with the *Prayer Book* in his hand; and the figure of a Romish Bishop with the *Mass Book* in his hand. The two last figures are in all respects *alike*, they have the same height, the same dress, the same look, the same every thing. Over them is written, "Every plant which my *Heavenly Father* hath not planted, *should be rooted up*." Here we

syren song with which it wrought its fascinations—
with which it charmed into a temporary coalition,
“ Christians of every name and descriptionⁿ,” and

have a true specimen of the Bible *only* to be distributed by the Protestant : and we know that in four years from that time the *Prayer Book* was formally abolished.” Marsh’s Reply to Milner, p. 138. 92.

The scrupulous preciseness with which the Puritans rejected all “ *Notes and Comments*,” and doated upon the *text* of Scripture, is thus noticed by Hooker, Ecc. Pol. Book ii. Sect. 1. The head theorem of all their discourses, who plead the change of Ecclesiastical Government in England is, “ *That the Scripture of God is in such sort the rule of human actions, that simply whatsoever we do, and are not, by it directed thereunto, the same is sin.*”

A curious exemplification of this theorem is exhibited in a Tract, printed during the Rebellion, entitled, “ *Accommodation discommended as incommodious to the Commonwealth.*”

It is a *Scholastic* production, and the argument is as follows : “ First, *Accommodation* is not the language of *Canaan*, and therefore it cannot conduce to the peace of *Jerusalem*. Second. It is no *Scripture word* : now, to vilify the ordinances which are in Scripture, and to set up *Accommodation*, which is not in Scripture, no, not so much as in the *Apocrypha*, is to relinquish *the Word* and to follow *the inventions of man*, which is plain popery.

° The exact similarity exemplified in the former note between the Puritans and the Bible Society, with respect to the pretext of the two confederacies, prevails no less in the comprehensive principle of both constitutions. This appears in the title assumed by the Root and Branch Faction, which went out from them in search of further reformation. “ This title,”

which it cited as its justification on all occasions, even when it was "overthrowing *God's altars*, slaying his *Prophets* with the sword," and shedding the sacred blood of his *Anointed*.

These are not points of *doubtful* disputation, they are *generally admitted* facts, registered by those who *did* the deeds, and either *gloried* in their doings, or had been *disciplined* into vexation and remorse by feeding upon the bitter fruit of their own devices^o; and if it be required, what could betray men *professing godliness* into such inhumanity and sacrilege as this, the cause is equally *notorious* with the effect; an overweening fondness for their *own* imaginations had engendered a disinclination either to the open-

(Independents) says Bates, "did well quadrate to *all* the other *sects* in general, and was used by them, because, depending on the government of no *National Church*, nor civil power, they ordered all things relating to *doctrine* and *Church discipline* in their private *congregations*. Not that most part of them had any concern for Religion, but that that specious profession, giving a *comprehensive latitude* to *all sects*, Anabaptists, Quakers, Millenaries, and *all* other fanatics, they might swell the number and power of their *faction*."—Troubles of England, p. 75.

° Edwards, in the dedication of his *Gangræna* to the Parliament, at once professes so strongly his former *attachment* to the cause of Puritanism, and his subsequent *abhorrence* of the outrages which it had occasioned, that his confession conveys a most wholesome lesson, and will therefore be found in the Collection of Documents, No. VI.

ing Scripture by the *key of knowledge*, or to the receiving it *so* opened by its *appointed* Keepers, and had induced them to conspire, even to take *this key* surreptitiously away; and thus “the Gospel became *hid*” to them, “they *knew not* the voices” of Christ and his Apostles, “which were” not merely “*read* to them every Sabbath-day,” but which were constantly *in their mouths*, and were prostituted to serve all the purposes of their most trivial conversation; and thus as the Jews had dealt with the *Master of the House*, so did they with *those of His household*; they *killed* them, that in their *own* conceits they might do good service to *God*, and might place Christ on his *throne* in unsullied majesty among them.

And, to close this speculative survey of the professed object of the Bible Society, there is a *moral* necessity that the same tremendous result should uniformly ensue, when, as is now the case, and as Mr. Nolan excellently states it, “under the pretext of *recommending the Bible*, the *Ministry* is *super-seded*, and mankind are set at liberty, to treat, after their own good will and pleasure, *a Book*, which they have all confidence enough to *believe* they can understand, and are weak enough to be *able* to pervert.” (Objections of a Churchman, p. 25.) See Appendix, No. 7.

There yet remains the constitution of the Society

to be made the subject of speculation, which, now that "the sole and exclusive *object*" (as it is called) is removed out of the way, and there is no *stalking horse* interposed to shelter it from observation, can scarcely need a remark to consign it, amongst conscientious men, whatever be their mode of faith, to general reprobation. For the *conscientious* Dissenter and the *conscientious* Churchman are, in this particular, in the same predicament, that neither of them can make a compromise of those dogmata, which, according to their respective interpretations of Scripture, constitute, in the belief of each of them, the *fundamentals* of Christianity; and to the Editor it is a paradox which he confesses himself not able to unravel; how, without making *such* compromise, they can join a *so* constituted association.

But his argument is with *Churchmen*; and he begs to refer them to the third Collect for Good Friday, and then to answer to themselves, how, believing with the Church, that "Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Heretics," are all *without the fold* of Christ, and that they are the victims of either "*ignorance, hardness of heart, or contempt of God's word,*" and how supplicating so heartily for the removal of their respective antipathies, and for their being "*fetch'd home to Christ's flock* that they may be saved amongst the remnant of the true Israelites,

and be made *one* fold under *one* Shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord ;” they can do that which seems so obviously calculated, as much as in them lies, to render of no effect these several supplications ; which levelling the *distinction* between Churchman and Sectary, will not only confirm those who have *wandered* from the fold, in the *error* of their way, but will *smooth* the path to *further* separation ?

The claims then of the Bible Society upon *Churchmen* for patronage and support, have been submitted to the test of experience, and have been weighed moreover in the balance of the Sanctuary, and have been found miserably defective in both : for there are two choice and comprehensive blessings—TRUTH AND PEACE, which Christians are to sustain and cultivate, as constituting Man’s chief good in *both* states of his existence ; and whilst, by its *object*, it prepares the way for changing the *former* of them into *a lie* ; by its *constitution* it dissipates the *latter*, and sows the seeds of *universal confusion*.

But withal it is most specious in its proceedings ; —it has that in its composition (as a Bristol associate hesitates not to publish, or the Parent Society (See p. 231—236.) to confirm,) which will lure into it, not merely Christians of every denomination, but Jews and Mahometans,—nay, even

Deists and Infidels: and will thus congregate, without all question, so formidable a confederacy, and one so precisely the counterpart of that, in the toils of which the martyred Sovereigns, both of England and of France, were taken; that, reflecting upon these instances of successful treachery, it is scarcely possible to avoid the inference from past experience of this kingdom's present perilous condition; or to repress the apprehensive exclamation of the rulers of Jezreel, "Behold two kings stood not before it, how then shall this country stand?" the answer, however, is obvious:—both the Sovereigns in question would not be awakened to their danger, and neglected till too late the proper remedies by which it might have been prevented; under God, therefore, our stability depends upon ourselves^p.

^p Leslie, in his *Rehearsal*, No. V. puts into the mouth of Observator (who personates one of the progeny of the Puritans) this account of the conceding policy of Charles I. by which *they* gained the ascendancy over *him*. "They (the Royalists) know better how to *get* a victory, than how to make *use* of it when they have got it. They will begin to court and to flatter us again to show their *moderation*! and still continue to employ us in places of power to please us. *This* was the method used by Charles I. all along; who often had it in his power to have crushed us to nothing, and ended (what he called) our *rebellion*. *This* gave us new strength, and we gained by *his* advantages over us, as well as by ours over him. For this shewed us to be the considerable party

When beset by *similarly constituted Societies* with that now under review, but having a *politi-*

which must be gratified, and of whom the Government was afraid. This magnified us in the eyes of the people, till we got them all over to us at last.

Louis XVI. says Barruel (*Memoirs of Jacobinism*, vol. iv. p. 394) might have known this perfidious Minister (Neckar.) The whole plan of the conspiracy, contrived by Neckar and his adepts of philosophism, had been laid before the King; but, alas! he could not be made to believe, that such *wickedness* and *hypocrisy* was to be found in man. The day came, however, when he sorrowfully exclaimed, *Why did I not believe it, eleven years ago was every thing foretold which now befalls me?* It was to Neckar that he alluded; for during his first ministry, was that man, and the plots contrived in his house, and at the hotel d'Holbach, formally denounced in a memorial to Mr. de Maurepas and to Louis XVI." The Editor could have illustrated the proceedings which have been under investigation by parallel passages, in every instance most apposite to his purpose, from the above Memoirs, but he has abstained from doing so because he has heard that the prejudice which, for obvious reasons, was attempted to be raised against them, has in some degree taken effect. His conviction is, that they contain internal evidence of their own authenticity, independently of the strong collateral evidence which Professor Robison's *Proofs*, &c. afford; that book being a contemporary production, and the two Historians having stated the same facts, without the least intercourse with or even knowledge of each other. Barruel has observed (vol. iv. p. 516,) that "the adepts have not forgot the land of their ancestors, the Puritans, the Anabaptists, and Independents," and that "the Scourge has been wafted across the ocean with all its plots."

cal pretext to cover their designs, it was God's great mercy to England, that more enlightened and vigorous counsels prevailed, and a wiser course was taken; she embodied the well-disposed into loyal associations: she exposed the sophistries of the propounders of the new Rights of Man;—and that so effectually as to recover to their allegiance many whose principles had been shaken, and touching very sensibly their generous affections, attached them more warmly than ever to her cause. The same measure must again be taken; adapted to the *new* cast of character which the enemy has assumed, and to the *new* point of attack which he has chosen. Instead of *unrestricted liberty*, the present pretext is a *generalized religion*, and the breach now meditated is made to confine its menaces solely to the *Church*; it being the deep-laid policy of its present assailants to detach the *State*, as much as possible, from taking part in the contest, by refraining studiously from any

No wonder then that attempts should be made to bring this practical illustration of them into disrepute; for should it be listened to, their designs must be defeated, but with the same assiduity that the sons of confusion labour to discredit it, should those who wish to foil them in their enterprizes exert themselves to recover its reputation, and to draw the public attention to its tremendous narrative, the preparatory scenes of which, with the most circumstantial accuracy, are now acting amongst ourselves, and in open day, without exciting apprehension.

hostile acts by which *its* jealousy may be excited. *Religious* associations, therefore, of all who retain any attachment to the national establishment of religion, are the first measures to be resorted to, and the adoption of them is a duty which a due regard to Christian obligations, no less than to temporal welfare, peremptorily imposes, that by one simultaneous expression of abhorrence against *Deistical generalities*, and of resolute adherence to the *Faith* and *Worship* of this *purely primitive* Church, and by the distribution of popular vindications of *its* formularies and ordinances, and of that *Apostolical* succession of the Priesthood of which, (without the pale of Popery,) it retains in these kingdoms the *exclusive* possession, the weak may be supported, the feeble-minded strengthened, a general stimulus given to orthodoxy and devotion, and the gainsayers consigned to shame and confusion of face⁹.

⁹ It is most profoundly observed by Barruel, that the Sect is a Sect of *opinion*; that nations have been seduced by a subterraneous warfare of *illusion, error, and darkness*; and that if it is our intention to guard against the misfortunes which have befallen France, honest men must oppose these with *wisdom, truth, and light*. (Memoirs, &c. vol. iv. p. 560.) The Psalmist long ago made a *similar* developement, when recounting the proud boastings of those aspiring geniuses in his days, who revolted at the very idea of having *any* Lord over them, he takes from their mouths this maxim of their policy, proclaimed, as it were in defiance, from their confi-

The Society for promoting Christian Knowledge which, by the instrumentality of the Clergy in their respective Parishes, and of a large body of pious laymen co-operating with them, has been, for above a century, unobtrusively supplying the religious wants of the nation with whatever pertains to life and godliness, is excellently adapted to form the nucleus of the projected associations, and, by means of the diocesan and district committees already formed under its auspices, and fostered by its superintendence, it has made considerable progress in this necessary incorporation. Let it be carried without delay into full effect. Let Churchmen congregate in their respective neighbourhoods, and that their devout energies may be concentrated and systematically called forth, let them rally, as to their center of union, round this venerable Society, and zealously contributing of all their talents to the prosecution of its labour of love, — THE MAINTENANCE AND DISSEMINATION OF THE

dence in its success, “ *By our tongues will we prevail.*” (Psalm xii. 4.) And in another place, (Psalm lxiv. 3.) he instructs us, that the only efficient method of counterplotting them is to turn their own weapons against themselves, and so completely to unravel their sophisms that “ *their own tongues,*” by which they wheedled themselves into the affections of the people, “ *shall make them fall,*” and their *detected* delusions turn the tide of popularity against them, and convert the plaudits of the misguided multitude, who had followed them in their simplicity into “ *the laughing them to scorn.*”

FAITH ONCE DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS,—let them testify their gratitude for the inestimable blessings which they enjoy, and commend themselves to the continued protection of the Almighty.

Then notwithstanding the portentous aspect of the present period, we may humbly hope to receive, as heretofore, in the time of need, deliverance from on high, and to be sustained on that distinguished eminence to which, amidst nations rendered desolate by the successful issue of similar designs, we have been elevated as the house of refuge for persecuted Christianity, and as the Mount Sion of these last days, the joy of the whole Earth.

APPENDIX OF DOCUMENTS

REFERRED TO IN THE

FOREGOING WORK.

No. I. P. 11.

AS the frame of my whole Book, (*De Veritate prout distinguitur à Revelatione verisimili, possibili, et à falso,*) was so different from any thing which had been written heretofore, I found I must either renounce the authority of all that had written formerly concerning the method of finding out truth, and consequently insist upon my own way, or hazard myself to a general censure, concerning the whole argument of my book; I must confess it did not a little animate me, that the two great persons abovementioned did so highly value it, yet as I knew it would meet with much opposition, I did consider whether it was not better for me awhile to suppress it. Being thus, doubtful in my chamber, one fair day in the summer, my casement being opened towards the South, the sun shining clear and no wind stirring, I took my book *De Veritate* in my hand, and kneeling on my knees devoutly said these words.

“ O Thou Eternal God, author of the light which now shines upon me, and giver of all inward illuminations, I do beseech Thee of thy infinite goodness to pardon a greater request than a sinner ought to make; I am not satisfied enough,

whether I shall publish this Book De Veritate, if it be for thy glory I beseech Thee, give me some sign from Heaven, if not I shall suppress it. I had no sooner spoken these words, but a loud though yet gentle noise, came from the Heavens (for it was like nothing on Earth) which did so comfort and cheer me, that I took my petition as granted, and that I had the sign I demanded, whereupon also I resolved to print my Book. This (how strange soever it may seem) I protest before the Eternal God is true, neither am I any way superstitiously deceived herein, since I did not only clearly hear the noise, but in the serenest sky that ever I saw, being without all cloud, did to my thinking see the place from whence it came."

Life of Lord Herbert, of Cherbury, 4to, 1770. p. 171.

The citations from Bates and Perenchief, are not given, because in both those instances, prayer was resorted to in *gross hypocrisy*. The above instance and that which follows, are those in point; as in both, recourse is had to it in *sincerity* but under *strong delusion*, and the most manifestly *false convictions* are produced.

P. 113.

"AS for Mr. Hutchinson, although he was very much confirmed in his judgment concerning the cause (the puritanical reformation) yet here being called to an extraordinary action, (the signing of the warrant for the King's death) whereof many were of several minds, he addressed himself to God by prayer, desiring the Lord that, if through any human frailty he were led into any error or false opinion, in these great transactions, he would open his eyes, and not suffer him to proceed, but that he would confirme his spirits in the truth;

and lead him by a right enlightened conscience; and finding no check, but a confirmation in his conscience that it was his duty to act as he did, he, upon serious debate, both privately in his addresses to God, and in conferences with conscientious, upright, unbiassed persons, proceeded to sign the sentence against the King. Although he did not then believe but it might one day come to be again disputed among men, yet both he and others, thought they could not refuse it without giving up the people of God, whom they had led forth and engaged themselves unto by the oath of God, into the hands of God's and their enemies, and therefore he cast himself upon God's protection, acting according to the dictates of a conscience which he had sought, the Lord to guide, and accordingly the Lord did signalize his favour afterwards to him."

Memoirs of Col. Hutchinson, Svo. vol. ii. p. 158.

"When the Collonels saw how the other poore gentlemen we trepaned that were brought in by the proclamation, and how the whole cause itselfe, from the beginning to the ending, was betrayed and condemned, notwithstanding that he himselfe, by a wonderful overruling providence of God, in that day was preserved: yet he looked upon himselfe as judged in their judgment, and executed in their execution; and although he was most thankful to God yet he was not very well satisfied in himselfe for accepting the deliverance. His wife, who thought she had never deserved so well of him, as in the endeavours and labours she exercised to bring him off, never displeased him more in her life, and had much adoe to persuade him to be contented with his deliverance, which, as it was eminently wrought by God, he acknowledged it with thankfulness; but while he saw others suffer, he suffered with them in his mind, and had not his wife perswaded him, had offered himselfe a voluntary sacrifice, but being by her convinced that God's eminent appearance, seemed to have singled him out for preservation, he with thanks acquiesced in that thing; and

further remembering that he was but young att that time, when he entered into this engagement, and that many who had preacht and led the people into it, and of that parliament, who had declared it to be treason, not to advance and promote that cause, were all now apostatized, and as much preacht against it, and called it rebellion and murther, and sat on the tribunnall to judge it; he again reflected seriously upon all that was past, and begged humbly of God to enlighten him and shew him his sin, if ignorance or misunderstanding had led him into error; but the more he examined the cause from the first, the more he became confirmed in it, and from that time sett himselfe to a more diligent study of the Scriptures, whereby he attained confirmation in many principles he had before, and dayly greater enlightenings concerning the free grace and love of God in Jesus Christ, and the Spiritual worship under the Gospel, and the Gospels liberty, which ought not to be subjected to the wills and ordinances of men in the service of God. This made him rejoyce in all he had done in the Lord's cause, and he would often say, the Lord had not thus eminently preserved him for nothing, but that he was yett kept for some eminent service or suffering in this cause; although having beene freely pardoned by the present powers, he resolved not to doe anie thing against the king, but thought himselfe obliged to sitt still and wish his prosperity in all things that were not destructive to the interest of Christ and his members on earth; yett as he could not wish well to any ill way, so he believed that God had set him aside, and that therefore, he ought to mourne in silence and retirednesse, while he lay under this obligation."

Memoirs of Coll. Hutchinson. Svo. 1810. vol. ii. p. 275.

No. II. P. 198, 301.

Extract from a Speech made at a Meeting, held in the Shire-Hall, Ipswich, Dec. 10, 1811, for the Establishment of a Suffolk Auxiliary Bible Society, by the Rev. John Owen, Secretary to the Parent Institution.

“ HE wished to congratulate the Chairman on his conduct, and on the success of the day; but he could find no terms adequate to those which had been already used. His treatment of the opponents of the Institution, had been liberal, and manly, and noble. His conduct towards them had been marked by tenderness, by firmness, and by judgment. Had it not been for his great and charitable forbearance, he might have exposed them to *obloquy*, and *contempt*, and *ex-ecration*. He knew that he had a secret document in his pocket, which, if produced, would overwhelm them with *shame* *. But his Christian feelings triumphed, and the ene-

* This formidable document was a letter from the Churchwardens of the Tower Church, refusing the use of it for the meeting, in which it had been advertised to be held. Whilst the Editor is writing this note intelligence is brought to him, by a person who was present, that last night, (September 20th) Spitalfields Church was used for the purpose for which the Tower Church was refused, or rather for a Bible Association instead of an Auxiliary Meeting. As was the case in Bishopsgate Church, a stage was erected for the orators in the front of the reading desk; the Church was crowded. Some clergy of the Establishment, and sectaries of all denominations harangued the assembly in that stile of oratory, and with those arguments of which, speci-

ries of the meeting were suffered to rest in peace. The time, however, would come when he should be exalted, and they would *be debased*; when, like the bold and towering column, he should be elevated, and they should *be trampled on and despised, like the wretched slaves that swell the proud triumph of the conqueror.*"

As a suitable accompaniment to the above specimen of Mr. Owen's strains of eloquence, during his paroxysms of wrath, the ensuing effusion, evidently uttered in the exstasy of admiration, is subjoined. Thus connected they form a pair of spectacles through which that gentleman may be easily read and cannot well be mistaken. The gentleman whose apotheosis is thus celebrated is said to be Mr. Grant, Jun.

" And here, Sir, while I pay all due respect to the exertions of others, and particularly to those of the honourable and learned gentlemen, who addressed us in an early stage of the proceedings, I cannot withhold my humble testimony of admiration to the prodigious display, both of talent and piety, on the part of another honourable gentleman who, in his exertions this day, has not only surpassed others, but exceeded himself.

" Sir, while I listened to the lofty strains of Christian eloquence, in which that honourable gentleman pleaded the cause of the Bible, I felt I could sympathize with those enraptured heathens, who, when they heard the words of truth from the lips of Inspiration, exclaimed, " The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men ! " To me, however, the terms of the statement required to be inverted in or-

mens have been already given, and which are so powerfully delusive with the poor ; but what is chiefly to be noticed, is the continual *clapping* with which the desecrated edifice resounded, and the *thanks* which were voted to the Rector and Churchwardens for *allowing* the Church to be so employed.

der to suit the circumstances of the case. I saw in the speaker, a mortal like myself; but elevated above the standard of his own great powers by the majesty of the great subject on which he spoke. To my view he seemed to have *wrapped himself in the skirts of that garment, with which the Father of Light is covered*; and while he appeared to reflect a lustre borrowed from the *Divinity* itself, methinks I could have found it in my heart to exclaim: "*men are come among us in the likeness of God!*"—Mr. Owen's Speech at the Bloomsbury Auxiliary Meeting. See Account of Proceedings, p. 71.

No. III. See p. 239.

"*PRIVATE* opinions, especially if countenanced by some of *eminent name*, were looked on as the *public resolutions* of the Anglican Church, and the poor Church condemned for teaching those doctrines which by the artifice of some men had been fastened on her. So that it was not without some ground that the Archbishop of Spalato, having gone from hence, did upbraid this Church, in his "*Consilium Re-deundi*," for taking into her confession (which he acknowledges of itself to be sound and profitable) "*multa Calvinii et Lutheri dogmata*," many strange doctrines broached by Luther, and held forth by Calvin. To which, when Dr. Crackanthrope was commanded to make an answer, he thought it neither safe nor reasonable to deny the charge, or plead not guilty to the bill: and therefore, though he called his book *Defensio Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ*, yet he chose rather to defend *those* dogmata that had been charged on this Church in the Bishop's pamphlet, than to ~~assert~~ to this

Church *her* genuine doctrines. They that went otherwise to work were like to speed no better in it, or to be otherwise requited for their honest zeal, than to be exposed to public envy, and made the common subject of reproach and danger. So that I must needs look upon it as a bold attempt (though a most necessary piece of service) as the times then were in Bishop Montague of Norwich, in his answer to the Popish Gagger and the two appellants, to lay the saddle on the right horse, as the saying is, I mean to sever or discriminate the *opinions of particular men* from the *received and authorized doctrines of the Church of England*; to leave the one to be maintained by their private fautors, and only to defend and maintain the other. And certainly had he not been a man of a mighty spirit, and one that easily could condemn the cries and clamours which were raised against him for so doing, he could not but have sunk remedilessly under the burden of disgrace and the fears of ruin, which that performance drew upon him. *To such an absolute authority were the names and writings of some men advanced by their diligent followers, that not to yield obedience to their ipse dixit was a crime unpardonable.*"

Heylin's Theologia Veterum. Address to the Reader.

No. IV. P. 334.

The Advantages of distributing the Holy Scripture among the lower Orders of Society, chiefly by their own Agency.

"WHOEVER is acquainted with the history of the Reformation, cannot fail to have observed the extreme anxiety displayed by our Martyrs and Reformers for the free circu-

lation of the Bible. The same feeling has been found to animate wise and good men in every age, since the promulgation of the Gospel; and some of the charitable institutions, which have arisen in modern times, hold out the pleasing assurance, that this Christian principle still survives; that many are still emulous to follow the example before them, and are in some degree influenced by the spirit of those who have long since gone to the resting-place of the just.

One of the most important and effective institutions which the world has ever seen, is the British and Foreign Bible Society. Its means are great, but its projects are magnificent. It proposes to do nothing less than to diffuse the blessings of Revelation to all men. Its operations must be considered in a two-fold view: as a British Society, it directs its first regards to the wants at home; and as a Foreign Society, it encourages the reprinting and dissemination of acknowledged versions, where they already exist, and promotes translations, and the circulation of the Scriptures, where they are wholly unknown.

The efforts and utility of such an Institution can be limited only by its means; and in proportion to the augmentation of its funds, will it extend the empire of knowledge and of truth. The assistance which has been afforded by Auxiliary Societies in many parts of the country, can hardly be estimated at too high a rate. By calling the attention of the opulent to the want of Bibles in their own vicinity, they have contributed very essentially to the benefit of thousands, who might otherwise have remained in ignorance; and by aiding the funds of the parent Institution, they have enabled it to carry on its foreign operations with great and increasing success. Many are the prayers which have ascended from distant lands on behalf of their benefactors in Britain, and many are the blessings which have been invoked on their heads.

That a project of this godlike tendency, so full of merrry, and so abundant in reward, should be checked or narrowed by the want of resources, is a circumstance deeply to be lamented. Yet nothing is more certain, than that the efforts already made, however glorious and however unexampled, are not commensurate with the magnitude of the case. Here is a world in ignorance! a world to be enlightened and evangelized! To the reflecting mind it must be obvious, that a plan, which shall at the same time adequately supply the demands at home, and effectually meet the hopes and expectations of those myriads of human beings, who, in other lands, suffer "a famine of the word of the Lord," must be supported by more general interest, and aided by more extensive means.

To complete the system which has commenced, and been conducted with such happy results, no measure seems to have occurred of such reasonable promise as Bible Associations *. The contributors to the Institution in London, and to its Auxiliaries and Branches in different parts of the country, consist in general of that class of persons, who are somewhat elevated in the scale of society. It is the object of Bible Associations to bring into action also the inferior classes; to collect subscriptions not merely from the opulent, but likewise from that large body of the people, who are unable to give much, and are yet not unwilling to give a little. If the number of contributors be great, the accumulation

* Bible Associations have been established in many places. The Auxiliary Bible Society for Blackheath and its neighbourhood, has ten within its district; and one, within the town of Darlington, produces after the rate of 70l. a year, being more than adequate to supply the deficiency of the Scriptures amongst the poor of that town; thereby completely liberating the funds of the Auxiliary Bible Society for Darlington and its vicinity, so far as relates to the town of Darlington itself, for the supply of foreign parts. Note by the Author.

even of small sums, will not be contemptible; and it may be presumed, that most persons, who are not absolutely in the lowest walks of life, can afford a subscription of a penny a week.

A series of resolutions, recommended for adoption by Bible Associations, is subjoined to this address. In illustration of that paper, it may be proper to observe, that while the committees of such associations are formed from the contributors themselves, yet *the stimulus must be afforded by others*. On the formation of an Auxiliary or Branch Society, the *members of the committee* (under the designation of sub-committees) should select certain districts for their own more immediate exertions, and endeavour to *awaken the attention of the inferior classes* to the importance of rendering whatever aid they can afford. It would be expedient to appoint a *numerous* committee for each association, in order that a *greater interest* may be excited, and that the wants of the poor may be more accurately known. Certain members of the Auxiliary or Branch Committees should also be appointed frequently to sit with the Committees of Bible Associations. A proper direction will thus be given to their efforts; a *similarity of system* will be maintained; and the parent Society, with all its auxiliaries and dependencies, will thus present a perfect whole, correspondent in plan, and united in harmony: a noble fabric, in which all the parts are combined at once for beauty and for strength; whose foundations are laid deep in the ground, but its pillars are seen from afar, and its turrets sparkle in the skies*.

* The machinery recommended to the adoption of the poor, or rather to the country agents of the Society, in this passage, and which has been accurately copied in the constitution of all Bible Associations, is a republication of the system of the United Irishmen, with merely literal variations; and their figurative description of the Temple of Liberty,

As the object and tendency of the measure here recommended, is to promote the widest circulation of the Scriptures, and to excite the greatest attention to them through the whole mass of the community, it may seem almost superfluous to enlarge upon the benefits which must result from its adoption. In a land professing to be Christian, where is the man who would arrest the free streams of heavenly mercy? Where is the man who would not rather rejoice to behold every mound and barrier swept away by the ample tide?—to see the liberal current “overflow and pass over” in all its rich and fertilizing influence? that the soil, which has hitherto been parched and unfruitful, or “fertile only to its own disgrace,” may smile in new attraction, and cheer the eye with strange luxuriance.

If, in these awful times, we conceive ourselves to be placed upon an eminence from which we may contemplate the ever-varying scenes which are flitting around us, how melancholy is the prospect! The face of nature, indeed, continues the same; the works of creation still reflect the wisdom and goodness of the Creator; seed-time and harvest, and summer and winter, acknowledge their appointed course; the earth expands her beauties to the day, and the lights of heaven still rise and descend obedient to the will that formed them. But the moral world is thrown into convulsions; the image of God is defaced; the impress of the Divine hand seems to be almost obliterated; and the best and chiefest of

which they were confederated to erect, that “the ample earth was to be its area, and the arch of heaven its domē,” (see Irish Report, App. No. V.) is an idea so completely identical with the description of the Bible Society, “its pillars are seen from afar, and its turrets sparkle in the “skies;” that it seems almost necessary to conceive, that the authors of both had the same vision depicted on their imaginations, only that the taste of the Irish author was for *Græcian* architecture, whereas the *Gothic* was preferred by Mr. Dealtry. Note by the Editor.

his works—for the sake of which this fair and fertile earth is commanded to yield her increase, and the lights of heaven to travel on their destined way—presents little else than the fragments of a mighty wreck. Public principle has been violated, public order inverted; the fury of the nations has shaken, even to their base, the pillars of civilized society, and the stately edifice itself seems tottering to its fall. Long have we remained in tranquillity, spectators of the scene. We have heard, indeed, the rolling of the thunder; but it was a distant sound. We have seen the terrors of the lightning; but its violence has been spent upon others. The day seems now to be approaching, when this citadel of liberty itself may have to encounter the storm; to be rocked by the heavings of that earthquake, which has tumbled into ruins so many of the kingdoms around us. The ordinary checks of opinion and of law have been trampled upon with scorn. Plots of misrule, and confederacies strange to Englishmen, have spread with alarming rapidity, and have been accompanied by atrocities of sad and fearful expectation. Success has given confidence to crime: the incendiary hardly waits for the cover of darkness, and the hand of the assassin has executed its purpose even in the light of day.

These are scenes at which wise men are confounded, and good men turn pale. Nor will the considerate mind be much eased of its anxiety, by turning to the occurrences of private life, especially among the ignorant and uninstructed. In poverty there is nothing which necessarily tends to debase the character. Many have “wandered about in sheepskins and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy:” “the Son of Man” had “not where to lay his head;” but who can dwell, without emotion, upon the wretched state of the untutored and irreligious poor? It is here that we see human nature in its lowest condition, degraded and sunk in shame. We behold a creature, formed after the Divine resemblance, but without

one feature remaining to indicate his heavenly origin. For him there exists no reciprocal charity, no real union of affection, no Christian sentiment of mutual regard. To these feelings he is unable to rise; he knows them not, neither does he desire to know them. That state which was intended, by the Giver of every good and perfect gift, to add, above all earthly means, to the happiness of man, by the society of one who should be, at the same time, the ornament and the blessing of social life, presents little else than the spectacle of cruelty and of suffering. The wickedness of the parent is reflected in his offspring. Scarcely has the infant tongue learned to articulate, before it begins to blaspheme its Maker. The language of cursing and reviling is there; and those who ought to be the pledges of affection, contribute only to exasperate evil, and accumulate misery;—the scandal of their neighbours, and the disgrace of their kind;—without comfort in this world, without hope for the next,

Many are the evils, both of a public and private nature, to which human legislation can apply no remedy; they are to be removed by that influence alone which can reach the heart; by those sacred principles which are developed and enforced in the records of unerring wisdom. The Scriptures have ever been acknowledged, by good men, as the best foundation of morals; and those who labour to give them general circulation, and to excite a general interest for the perusal of them throughout the great body of the people, must be considered as rendering no common service both to individuals and to their country.

Let it be granted, that by any means the Holy Scripture is perused with diligence by every poor man who is able to read it; what would be the consequence? Is it too much to hope, that the noise of tumult and disorder may be hushed in peace? that men may be taught to fear God, and to honour the king? to do unto others as they wish that others should do unto them? and to discharge with fidelity all the

duties and relations of life? Is it an unreasonable expectation, that husbands may learn to cherish their wives, and to love their children? that woman may rise to her just elevation and legitimate influence? and that the virtues of the parents may shine forth in their offspring? If the blessings of Christianity should be extended to all according to the measure in which they are enjoyed by many, how would this world of sorrow and of pain be converted into a picture of Heaven? Should we refer to past experience, there is no fact more certain, than that the religious and moral state of every country may be fairly estimated by the facility of procuring Bibles, and the disposition to read them. "Appeal to a Christian, in any age and in any country, and ask him, what is the greatest benefit which one child of mortality can confer upon another; will he not refer you to the Bible? He will tell you, that the streams of charity may, indeed, flow in ten thousand channels, and that they will not fail to convey blessings wherever their course can be directed; but that the records of Heaven are calculated, above all other means, to meet the wants, and to diminish the sufferings of man; to point out to him his condition; to point out to him, also, his privileges; to improve his state, and to brighten his prospects; to impart consolation as he proceeds upon his earthly pilgrimage, and to cheer his last hours, even in the agonies of dissolving nature, with a hope full of immortality." It would seem as if the very touch of the inspired volume had power to communicate new feelings, and to kindle new desires; to elevate the standard of principle, and to raise the tone of morals; to purify the springs of domestic happiness, to tame the fierceness of the passions, to civilize manners, to bind in harmony the various "members of the embodied state," and to give to the family on earth some resemblance of the family above. Whenever Christianity has been permitted to walk forth in the native majesty of her form, and the loveliness of her character, a blessed influence has travelled by her side. Her

charms have fixed the regards of lisping infancy and of hoary age. The mouth which was once "full of cursing, deceit, and fraud," has learned to utter the language of sincerity and praise. The feet which were "swift to shed blood," have run with alacrity in the way of God's commandments. Mankind have been taught to love one another, and have delighted in the assembling of themselves together: the house of prayer has been crowded with worshippers, and the sentiment of every heart has echoed responsive to the sweet singer of Israel: "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts! my soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God. Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee." Let it be granted that the Scriptures are read with assiduity through the whole extent of our population, and results like these may be confidently anticipated. "My word shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it." What though the effects are not immediately perceptible; what though the groans of the creation are not at once hushed in repose, or converted into sounds of joy: the promise is indisputable, and the blessing is sure. The change in the moral world will resemble the change in the natural: the sun arises, and the dews descend; but the rigours of winter do not instantly abate, nor does the face of nature at once resume the gaiety of spring: yet the great principle of life and fertility is secretly at work; it is imperceptibly operating in ten thousand channels, and gradually covers the regions of sterility with luxuriant vegetation and abundant harvests.

If this be a just representation of the moral change which a knowledge of the Bible is calculated to produce, and if the system of Bible Associations tend, in an especial degree, to the general diffusion of that knowledge, few arguments can be so powerful as those which recommend their adoption. To the rich and to the middle ranks it may be urged, "You have

a deep interest in the welfare of the poor. If the security of a state depend upon the loyalty and morals of its people, by what other means can you contribute so essentially to the preservation of order, to the authority of the law, and the stability of the government? Among what description of men will you look for patience and industry, for sobriety and obedience? Who are the persons most decent in their demeanour, most frugal in their habits, and (what is no mean political consideration) most anxious to avoid the necessity of becoming chargeable to their parishes? The answer is obvious. And is it not, then, a matter of policy, as well as of duty, to create an interest among the lower classes for the possession and perusal of those sacred records, from which benefits so great and various are acknowledged to flow!

“And if ‘righteousness exalteth a nation,’ if national piety be recompensed by national mercies, in what way can you hope so effectually to secure to your native country the protection of Him by whom ‘kings reign, and princes decree judgment,’ as by extending the knowledge of his name, and the blessings of his religion? By such means may this empire be fixed indeed, upon the Rock of ages,—tranquil amidst general disturbances, and safe amidst surrounding ruin.

“Your zeal has already been attended by great success. By your liberal exertions, Britain has already become the benefactress of distant lands; and, while the nations are crumbling around her, she stands alone and pre-eminent. You have opened many channels through which the streams of mercy and of life may flow: but extensive deserts are still to be found, and England itself yet contains many a parched and thirsty waste. If the lower orders be ignorant, it must be yours to instruct them; if they be careless and indifferent in this good cause, it must be yours to rouse them into action. Shew them their privileges and their duty: lay before them the benefits which they must themselves experience from hearty co-operation in such a service, and appeal to their best feelings

by displaying the blessings which they will confer upon others. Let a concern for the circulation of the Scriptures be thus excited through the great body of our population, and the lapse of a few years will furnish every poor family in the British dominions with the treasure of a Bible. If the poor can be induced to subscribe, even the smallest weekly sum, for the possession of the Scriptures, and the distribution of them to others still poorer—if they can be led to inquire into the wants of their neighbours, and to arrange the best means of supplying them—an interest will gradually be created in their own minds, to which they have hitherto been strangers; and that, which at first was matter of indifference, will become the object of earnest attention. Such is the natural progress of the human mind. Those who give the Bible will soon find a desire to peruse it; and while engaged in recommending it to others, they will be impelled to examine it for themselves; to read it in their houses; to teach it to their children, and to make it the frequent subject of their thoughts and conversation.

“ Let no coldness or timidity suggest, that the attempt will be abortive: if despair of success should be the guide of our counsels, what great project could ever be accomplished? Had this feeling been suffered to damp the ardour of those who first raised the standard of Christianity among our ignorant forefathers, or to depress the spirit of our Reformers, what might have been, at this day, the condition of England? Was it in despair of success, that the champions of humanity fought, for twenty long years, the battles of injured Africa? Was it thus that they rose again and again, after combat and defeat, still fresh for engagement? No! confident in their good cause, and in the approbation of Him who is the Friend of the poor and needy, hoping as against hope, they pursued with determination their glorious way, till at length they broke her chains, and gave freedom to her sable sons. And why should you doubt of success in attempting to interest the poor upon the most interesting of all subjects?—Have they not senses,

feelings, affections, passions, like yourselves? Are they not influenced by the ordinary motives of hope and fear? Shall the ebullitions of folly, and the harangues of democracy, awaken their enthusiasm for earthly liberty, even in cases when they can complain of no oppression, and can urge no wrong; and shall they be utterly insensible, when called to contemplate that heavenly liberty which makes them free indeed? which releases them from the dominion of those sordid habits and degrading passions whose tyranny they experience every day? which rescues them from the bondage of Satan, and converts them into the children of God? Are they, in so many instances, ready to confer a trifling benefit upon their poor neighbour, and will they deny him the greatest which a child of mortality can bestow? Shall the motives which direct and govern them in the ordinary transactions of life, fail in that instance alone from which they derive tenfold force and incalculable importance? Shall the impression be less as the reasons are more powerful?

“ Will it be insinuated, that the lower orders would rather associate and contribute for a bad purpose than for a benevolent object? The very persuasion of their proneness to associate, should be an argument for attempting, with all your might, to give a right direction to that tendency, and to correct and improve it; if, by thus employing them in a good cause, they can be preserved from base and injurious combinations, you will render, both to them and to society, a double service. In times like the present, these considerations come with peculiar force.

“ Will it be urged, that we have no encouragement to proceed in this work of charity? What! when millions are rousing themselves, in different quarters of the world, from the lethargy of ages, anxious to behold ‘the Desire of all nations,’ can we possibly need any additional encouragement or motive for circulating those inestimable records which testify of Him?

“ Will it be contended, that no great effect can be produced by small contributions? The contribution of an individual to the government is small; but it is by the aggregate of such sums that the state is supported. A ray of light and a drop of rain are small; but it is by the sun and the shower that our harvests wave in the field, and by the accumulation of waters that the riches of all lands are transferred to this.

“ ‘ Freely ye have received, freely give :’ if you acknowledge for yourselves the blessed influence of Divine Revelation, invite others to partake of it. The light of Heaven is streaming, in all its effulgence, above and around you : O, let not the beams be intercepted ! Open for it a free passage into the dwellings of the poor !”

To men of humbler condition it may be observed, in addition to the arguments already adduced :

“ Although, for reasons best known to Infinite Wisdom, the Almighty has withheld from you rank and opulence, yet has he given to you the privilege of conferring benefits on others, and of conferring them in the highest degree. The facilities which you possess, for discovering the wants of those immediately around you, may be considered as an intimation of Providence, that, according to your ability, you should seek to relieve them. Silver and gold you may have none to give ; but you can give that which is better than rubies. You cannot, indeed, raise your poor neighbour above the pressure of the times, or remove those afflictions which are especially incident to his condition ; but you can furnish him with a remedy for all : you can present him with those oracles of wisdom, which will enlarge his views, and brighten his prospects ; which will teach him that this scene of trouble is but the pilgrimage of a day ; that he is but the tenant of an earthly tabernacle, which shall presently be dissolved ; and that the disembodied spirit shall then seek its everlasting home,

shall ascend to that 'building of God, the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.'

"Since the beginning of time, no method has ever been devised, by which you might do good on so large a scale, and by such easy means. The effects arising from other acts of charity, must often be confined to the immediate object; but the influence of your liberality will probably be permanent, and descend with increasing blessings from age to age. It is an enterprize of exalted benevolence, which would become a sovereign better than his crown, and add a greater lustre to his throne than the widest enlargement of dominion. This is a work which may bring all classes into action without prejudice to any: here the rich and the poor may meet together in common exertion, for common good: poverty itself may be thus enriched, and the lowest rank ennobled: one generous feeling may animate all the orders of society, may impel them to the same labour of love, and crown them with the same reward.

"What pleasure can be derived even from wealth, like the pleasure of doing good? and this is a gratification which, without riches, you may enjoy in its highest measure. Look upon your poorer brethren, and then ask, whether any delight can surpass the enjoyment of charity like this?—of charity, that extends blessings the most pure and exalted, to the humblest of mankind—that produces 'an elevation of mind and of feeling, which no poverty but Christian poverty can exhibit'—that gives light to the blind, heals the broken heart, brings life and immortality to light among those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, and renders the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the promises. If the blessings of those who are ready to perish be worthy of acceptance, then may you be blessed; if there be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, then may the angels of God rejoice even in your labours, and the

Father of mercies himself look down with approbation upon you. Above all other considerations, let this be supreme:— if by engaging in these acts of benevolence, you are induced to read your Bibles with more earnestness for yourselves, you may become Christians indeed; and, however low your situation in this life, the treasures of that better world will be your rich and eternal repayment.”

And is it not a recommendation to men of all classes, that this system will carry the tidings of salvation into the most distant lands? When the demands at home shall have been satisfied by the contributions of the poor, the subscriptions of the more opulent to the parent Society and all the Auxiliaries, may be wholly converted into foreign channels. Thus will the lower orders, by their exertions at home, greatly contribute to the increase of the supply abroad; and, in this view, may even then be considered as elevating on high the standard of Christianity, as becoming “heralds of salvation to the ends of the earth.”

They will share in the services and in the triumphs of those who, by the blessing of the Almighty, shall be made the instruments of “shewing his glory” to the millions of their fellow-creatures that sit in utter darkness, or that hitherto have only caught glimpses of the light of Revelation, like interrupted flashes distantly shooting across a gloomy sky. They will march, if we may so speak, in the retinue of Him who shall come forth “conquering and to conquer.” They will add wings, as it were, to that angel of mercy, who shall fly into all lands, bearing the everlasting Gospel. Their hearts will be gladdened by the gratitude of those whom, under God, they shall have assisted to save; and they will receive yet a far ampler reward in that place, where “THEY THAT BE WISE SHALL SHINE AS THE BRIGHTNESS OF THE FIRMAMENT, AND THEY THAT TURN MANY TO RIGHTEOUSNESS, AS THE STARS FOR EVER AND EVER.”

Here follow, as usual, Resolutions recommended for Adoption at Meetings assembled for the Formation of Bible Associations.

*Address to the Labouring Classes inhabiting the
North-East Part of London.*

YOUR Neighbours and Friends, with His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent, and many benevolent Noblemen and Gentlemen at their head, have formed themselves into a Society, called the

North-East London Auxiliary Bible Society.

And they have done this with two motives.

First, They wish that every person who can read in Spitalfields, Bethnal Green, Shoreditch, Hoxton, Moorfields, and the neighbouring parts, should have a Bible. Then,

Secondly, They wish that every person should give what he is able toward sending the Bible to the Poor in all parts of the British Empire; and getting it translated into every language, and sent all over the world.

Among those who will read this Address, there will be various opinions on this matter.

1. When we look into the Bible, and see that it commands every man to "love God with all his heart, and mind, and soul, and strength; and his neighbour as himself;" and then walk through the streets, and hear profaneness on all sides, and see almost every where selfishness, and ill-nature, and malice, and wickedness—we begin to fear that not a few who read this paper, will say—

" You want me to have a Bible, and to help to give one to those that are poorer than I am ! Why I don't know what good the Bible will do me or others !"

Miserable men!—the Book of God is his best gift to us perishing sinners, next to Jesus Christ, whom that Book offers to us as a Friend and Saviour. And, by the good providence of God, you have been taught to read : and you must very soon give account to God, how you have employed that skill which you have acquired in reading, and how you have valued his Book, and what you have thought of the Saviour ! If you waste your time on silly or bad books, or care nothing for the Bible, it would have been better for you never to have been born ! It will be more tolerable for poor ignorant savages in the Day of Judgment than for you.

2. Another person may say, when he reads this Address—

" You want me to assist you in this good work ! I wish I could : but I can hardly get money to buy food !"

Is this true ? We shall enquire into it. And if we find you a worthy and industrious man, and you wish to have a Bible or a Testament, and promise to make a good use of it, and yet cannot possibly buy one : depend upon it we will give you one ; and it shall be a good print, and such as will be a treasure to you. We will beg money from those who are not so poor as you are, that you may have a Bible or Testament without paying for it. We know that this will occasion us much trouble ; but, as we wish every body that can read to have God's blessed Book in his house, we shall not regard our trouble for the sake of a worthy and industrious man.

3. Another person will say—

" I should like a Bible or a Testament, and I would pay for it too : but I cannot raise the money at once. I could raise it by a little at a time."

To such an one we reply—We will help you. You may pay the money by a penny or more every week; and when you have half or three-quarters paid for the Bible or Testament, you shall have it, and may pay the rest of the money afterward. And then you must consider, that the Bible Society allows us to have Bibles and Testaments cheaper than booksellers themselves can buy them; and we shall sell them to you at the same price. Read over the List at the end, and you will see how much cheaper a poor man may buy a Bible or Testament of the North-East London Society, and be allowed too to pay for it by a penny a week, than he can buy it of a bookseller, and yet he must pay for it at once.

4. But, here and there, we shall find a good man who will say—

“ Have a Bible or Testament ! Yes : I love the Bible : I had one once : but, in these hard times, I have been obliged to part with it.”

Or another may say—

“ See here is a very old and worn-out Bible : I should be very glad to have a better. My eyes are growing dim ; and I want one with a good large letter, that I can read easily.”

And both these good men may tell us—

“ I will give my penny a week to buy such a Bible ; and, when I have bought myself one, I will go on with my penny a week to help others. And, if I can manage it, I will give two-pence weekly : one penny shall go to buy my own Bible, and the other shall go to help somebody poorer than I am. I wish every man in the world to have a Bible.”

Whatever labouring man or woman shall meet our proposal in this manner, will rejoice our hearts. We know that there are many such worthy persons in this quarter of the town, whom

the goodness and mercy of God have delivered from the power of those vices which disgrace so many of the poor, ruin their families, disquiet their own consciences, disturb their neighbours, and, if continued in, will eternally destroy their souls.

Come forward then, worthy friends, to our assistance. Give your penny, or your two-pence a week, according as you can spare it: and afford us a little of your time. We want friends among the poor, who will undertake to collect the weekly contributions of 20 or 30 of their neighbours. And we shall be happy to see such Collectors at all our Meetings; where they shall, if they please, give their votes on all questions.

We expect that these different opinions will be formed by persons who read this Address. But we are heartily desirous of doing good to every man and woman who reads it. And we pray God, that those who have been careless about the Bible, may be careless no more: for we can assure all such persons, that things go well with us, and all is happy within, even in affliction, just in proportion as we follow the Bible; and that we find ourselves miserable, however prosperous in the world, just in proportion as we neglect it.

And we do think, therefore, that every poor person, or working man, who considers well what he owes to Almighty God for casting his lot in a Christian land, will heartily thank the Royal Duke, and the Noblemen and Gentlemen, and his Friends and Neighbours, who invite him to come forward, and first provide himself with the Book of God, and then do what he can to provide all the world with that blessed Book.

There are two sorts of notions among poor persons about being charitable.

Some say—"What have we to do with charity? We need charity ourselves. Let the rich give their money; we have got none to give."

We say to such persons—We do not ask for a single penny from a poor man whose family really requires it. But remember, that, if you waste an hour in idleness, which might be spent in labour, or in doing good to others; or if you waste a penny in folly and sin; you will one day be punished, if you repent not, as unfaithful stewards of the little time and money entrusted to your care. A poor man must account, as faithfully, for his pence and his hours, as a richer man for his pounds and his days. God gives many of these talents to some men; but he gives one talent to all: and none of the idle or wasteful poor will escape the doom of the “unprofitable servant.”

But there is another notion among the Poor respecting charity: and they are the more worthy people who have this opinion.

They say—“*We wish to do good, but how is it possible? We do give a penny, now and then, when we see some that are more wretched than ourselves: but what is that? We can take no share in these noble Societies: our poor penny will do no good!*”

To such worthy people we reply—If you will consider a little, you will see, that, never in your lives, did you meet with such encouragement to be charitable as you do now.

The penny which you have now and then given to a wretched person, has perhaps been thrown away in liquor at the next shop; but here it is sure to be laid out well.

When your pence are given singly, they seem to you to do no good: but here one follows the other, and they are kept carefully by us, till you may see and enjoy the good produced by them, in having an excellent Bible or Testament in your house, or in seeing one in the house of your neighbour, bought with this money.

Beside you can do more than the rich will!—"How is that possible?" you say. Why consider a moment. There are about fifteen millions of men, women, and children, in this Empire: suppose but five millions of them to be working people, and all of these to give a penny a week each, they would raise more than a *million of money* in the year; and that is far more than we can ever hope to raise for printing and circulating the Bible from those who can give their guinea a year.

Let all unite then in this good work! Let rich and poor labour together! The blessing of God will rest on us and our families, if we love his word ourselves, and do all in our power that others may possess it and love it too.

(By Order of the Committee)

JOSIAH PRATT,	} Secretaries,
JOSEPH BROOKSBANK,	
JOHN BALLANCE,	

Committee Room,
5, Raven-Row.

THE BIBLE.

“ Search the Scriptures.”

John v. 39.

READER, is it in your power to obey this command? HAVE YOU A BIBLE?—In a Christian Country, this may appear a strange question; but, Reader, it has lately been asked in more than TEN THOUSAND Families in this great Metropolis, and, stranger still, the answer, in more than FIVE THOUSAND, has been—“ No !” The enquiry has been made by persons earnestly desirous of ascertaining the fact, in order that proper measures might be adopted for supplying so serious a want; wherever it is discovered.—They have gone from house to house, and from room to room, and they have found ONE HALF of their neighbours destitute of that sacred Book, which would “ make them wise unto Salvation, through faith in CHRIST JESUS !”

If such be the case in London, what must be the condition of the people in the more neglected parts of the Kingdom? It is now made certain, that multitudes, in every direction, are longing for the Treasure which, hitherto, they have been unable to obtain.—And why is it that you are told these awful facts? It is, that you may assist in supplying yourself, your neighbours, your countrymen, and the world, with this Guide through Life! this Teacher of the way to Heaven!—Reader, look around you! consider the conduct of those of your friends and acquaintance who read the BIBLE, and endeavour to obey its holy precepts! Are THEY bad Fathers, Husbands, or Neighbours?—Are THEY Drunkards, Liars, or Pilferers?—Are THEY violent and quarrelsome?—Are they not honest, industrious; and peaceable;—domestic in their manners, sober in their con-

duct, and friendly in their dispositions? Reader, observe them closely, and answer these questions for yourself.—

If you possess a BIBLE and read it with serious attention, you know its value; if you do not possess it, you may have one for a trifle, which the generality, even of the poorest, may contrive to spare.—Your neighbours, whom Divine Providence has blessed with affluence, are willing to bear the greater part of the expence; they are cheerfully coming forward to enable you to possess this cheap, but invaluable, Treasure. But you must do SOMETHING yourselves;—you are not asked for the FULL PRICE of a Bible. Those who now address you, can feel for your temporal wants; they know that many of you cannot afford to pay what a Bible costs, and therefore, THEY contribute what you cannot spare, in order that you may be supplied with, and that every family in Great Britain may possess, a BIBLE.

You are now, for the first time since the creation of the World, invited as a body, to be partakers in the privileges of the Rich:—you are invited “to taste the luxury of doing good”—to assist in a great and glorious design, that of hastening the happy period when Peace, Mercy, and Love, shall reign throughout the universe, and “THE KINGDOMS OF THIS WORD BECOME THE KINGDOMS OF OUR LORD, AND OF HIS CHRIST.”

And how, you say, can I contribute to the support of this great and good work?—By joining one of the BIBLE ASSOCIATIONS which are establishing all around you.—One penny a week constitutes you a member of a Society, whose only object is to distribute the BIBLE.—Reader, to be a member of such a Society is an honour indeed! If you have not a BIBLE you may speedily possess it; if you have one, you will speedily be the means of supplying a neighbour, and may, under the blessing of God, be an instrument of leading a Family to Heaven.

Before you enter on the labours of the day, and when those labours are concluded and you retire to your homes, if you take up the Volume of Truth, and read a portion of it to your assembled family, delightful consequences may be expected to flow from the practice, as it regards both yourself and your children; and among those consequences we anticipate a readiness, or rather an eager desire, to promote all around, what you and your children enjoy.

BRISTOL BIBLE ASSOCIATION.

ADDRESS TO THE PUBLIC.

THE Holy Scriptures contain the Revelation of His will who made us, and who will be our Judge at the Last Day. They were "written by inspiration of God," for the purpose of "making us wise unto Salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." They are the "Revelation of Jesus Christ," teaching us what He has done, and what He is willing to do, in order to make us holy and happy, here and hereafter.

The Bible therefore must be a most valuable possession. Without the knowledge of what the Bible teaches us, a sinner (and we are all "miserable sinners") can have no comfort under the unavoidable troubles of life, and no hope in the prospect of death. The Bible, rightly used, makes the poor rich, and the miserable happy. It is an inestimable blessing, in which the rich and the poor have an equal right and interest.

THE BIBLE ASSOCIATION has been formed for the purpose of supplying the poor with this inestimable treasure,—of making every poor man the possessor of a Bible,—of

opening to him a source of comfort in his poverty and distress which the world cannot give nor take away.—The Bible, if read with prayer for the light of God's Holy Spirit, will teach him the secret of living happily in a miserable world, and of dying joyfully in the prospect of a better.

The foregoing Rules will shew the plan of this Association. It will place the BIBLE within the reach of every man who desires to possess it. It will accommodate the price of a Bible to the means which the poor have of purchasing it. And surely those who feel any love to the Holy Scriptures, would rather purchase them at a price adapted to their ability, and thus afford a proof of that love, than receive them as a gift; especially when they consider that the sum they pay, however small, will assist in supplying others who may be poorer than themselves.

THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY, during the eight years it has existed, has done immense good at home and abroad, by furnishing those with the written Word of God who had it not, and who could not have obtained it without the Society's aid. Thousands and tens of thousands of Bibles and Testaments have been yearly distributed by its means; but millions of our fellow creatures still remain destitute of this unspeakable blessing. And, surely, every one who is concerned for his own salvation must be anxious to contribute to this good work,—to be employed, according to his ability, in thus promoting the glory of God his Saviour, and the present and eternal happiness of mankind, by spreading the knowledge of the gospel of Christ.

THE BRISTOL BIBLE ASSOCIATION therefore proposes to afford the poor an opportunity of casting their mite (see Mark xii. 41, &c.) into the treasury of the Lord. For why should the pleasure, the honour, the privilege of furnishing the world with Bibles be confined to the rich? There are many who cannot give much, who yet would be delighted to give a little: and it may be presumed that there are

multitudes who can afford the small subscription of *one penny a week*. And may not the Christian subscriber to this blessed object indulge a confident hope, that what he thus gives will consecrate the fruits of his daily labour, and that a blessing from heaven will attend the work of his hands. (Comp. Mat. iii. 10, Prov. xix. 17.)

Should any one be ready to ask, What can such subscriptions avail towards supplying the world with Bibles? let him remember that the Ocean is made up of drops, and the World of atoms.—A single subscription of one penny a week, will supply a Bible and a Testament yearly: and if that Bible, and that Testament, being accompanied with the prayers of the subscriber and the receiver, should be the means of converting a soul, how vast is the good done by a penny a week! And who can tell into how many hands that Bible or Testament may pass!—How many may read them! How many receive spiritual and eternal benefit by them! If one subscription of one penny a week will distribute one Bible and one Testament, one hundred such subscriptions will distribute one hundred Bibles and one hundred Testaments. And how many such subscriptions may be obtained in this great City! It is not too much to expect that some hundreds of pounds may be subscribed, and some thousands of Bibles distributed by the agency of the middling and lower orders of society among us.

But let it not be understood that the Committee, in addressing themselves to the middling and lower classes of society, mean to confine their application to them: they look further, and entertain sanguine expectations that many who have already subscribed to the Bristol Auxiliary Bible Society, will be disposed to aid the fund of the Bible Association, considering that the more immediate object of this latter Institution is to supply the poor of our own city with the Holy Scriptures.—Charity begins at home. And they also hope that many others, who have not subscribed to the Auxiliary Society, may, through

this Association, be brought to an acquaintance with, and feel an interest in, this most important Institution. They hope that their cause will be warmly patronized in the Schools for both sexes in this city and its neighbourhood, and that the younger members of the Christian Church, who are therein training up for important stations in it, will thus begin a career of piety and charity, which may afford hope of extensive usefulness in maturer age.

The general Committee of the Bible Association hope to find among all denominations of their fellow Christians a spirit of zeal for promoting this great work. One object of this address is to solicit the assistance of their brethren in forming sub-committees in every parish of the city, and in as many of the villages adjoining the city as can be induced to unite with them. And they confidently hope that the disciples of Christ, the true friends of mankind, will cheerfully come forward to their aid, by assisting to collect subscriptions, to enquire into the want of Bibles in their respective districts, and to supply those who may be found without the Scriptures and desirous of possessing them.

Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth a sinner from the error of his way, SHALL SAVE A SOUL FROM DEATH, and hide a multitude of sins. (JAMES v. 19, 20.)

No. V. p. 355.

Extract from Dugdale's Short View of the late Troubles, p. 36.

“ Under a seeming devout and holy pretence, to advance and promote the preaching of the Gospel, they got in a number of *Lecturers* into most of the *corporate* towns, and *populous* places of this realm (according to the pattern of *Geneva*) especially into the *City of London*; whom they maintained by *voluntary* contributions.

“ And for the better support of these Bontefeuz, they purchased in divers *impropriate tithes*: constituting *feoffees*, some of the Clergy, some Lawyers, some Citizens (*all of the Puritan party*) under colour of redeeming the Lord's portion out of lay hands (as the phrase then was.) By which subtile practice, they gained many large sums in order thereto, from sundry *well-meaning* people; especially such as lay on their *death-beds*; who being *thus* incited to this seeming glorious work, saw nothing at all of the *main* design which was under hand driven on by the grand contrivers. Besides this, they likewise cunningly wrought, that such as were of their party, might by one means or other be made *Heads of some Houses in the Universities*; as they did in Emanuel Colledge, and Catherine Hall, in Cambridge; New Inn, and Magdalen Hall, in Oxford. And for an essay of those whom under colour of preaching the Gospel, in sundry parts of the realm, they determined to make instrumental for carrying on the work, they set up a morning lecture at St. Antholin's Church in London; where (as probationers for that purpose) they first made tryal of their abilities, which place was the grand nursery, whence most of the seditious preachers were after sent abroad throughout all England, to poyson the people with their Antimonarchial principles. These being the men, who first began to infuse into their auditors a

disaffection to the Church-discipline established by law, pretending it to savour of popery, and after a breach made therein, then to cry out against miscarriages in government, so that having in a short time weaned the people from kneeling at prayers, and bearing part in the public service of God by their mutual responses as the Liturgy directs; they then cryed down those reverend set forms of devotion, which were enjoined by the law; and by degrees using them to long-winded *extempore* prayers, of their own indigested composure (which they called praying by the Spirit) at length insinuated to them, that the *Liturgy* by law established was no other than the *mass* translated into English, and a thing *utterly nauseous* to God Almighty; by which means multitudes deserted the publick prayers of the Church in divers places, where the incumbents continued *regular*, and forbore to come there until the Psalm preceding the sermon began. So that in the end, the decent and pious order, in serving God, according to the laws, not only became by little and little wholly antiquated; but such of the Clergy, as making any conscience of their subscriptions, and oath of canonical obedience, observed the rule; were frequently scandalized with innovation in Religion, and inclination to Popery; few regarding any thing but the sermons, and those tedious extempore prayers of the preacher in order thereto; placing all Religion in being present at those wild and frothy exercises, tho' they slept when they came there, or little regarded what was said.

“ In which prayers (if I may so call them) it was no wonder to hear them, cunningly to insinuate that, which might put the people into a jealousy of the King, and the inferior Magistrates, by praying against this or that miscarriage; of which, by their subtil expressions they would have their auditory believe them to be guilty in point of government, or personal demeanour. Nor were those their sermons, for the most part, other than vain and frivolous declamations against Popery, wherewith they affrighted the more ignorant

sort of people ; as if that were the only thing that would endanger their souls, enslave their consciences, and utterly ruine them in their temporal estates. By which sleight, in drawing their thoughts from what was really the grand danger, they led them blindfold into those mists of error and ignorance, wherein they became afterwards miserably shackled, and were made slaves to those grand contrivers ; who, at length, by these devices, got the full power of the sword into their hands ; verifying therein that prophetic expression of the venerable and judicious Hooker, in that excellent preface to his Books of Ecclesiastical Polity, viz. after the Puritans have first resolved, that attempts for discipline are lawful ; it will follow in the next place to be disputed, what may be attempted against superiors.”

No. VI. p. 379.

Extract from the Epistle Dedicatory to the Parliament, prefixed to Edwards's Gangræna. Containing a synopsis of his profession of cordial attachment to the Cause of Puritanism, and his Picture of the Enormities which it had produced.

I AM one who out of choice and judgment, have embarked myself, wife, children, estate, and all that's dear to me, in the same ship with you, to sink or perish, or to come safe to land with you ; and that in the most doubtful and difficult

times : not only early, in the beginning of the war and troubles, in a malignant place ; among courtiers, and those who were servants, and had relation to the King, Queen, and their children ; pleading your cause, justifying your wars, satisfying many that scrupled. But, when your affairs were at lowest, and the chance of war against you ; and some of the grandees and favourites of these times, were packed up and ready to be gone ; *I was then* highest and most zealous for you ; preaching, praying, stirring up the people to stand for you, by going out in person, lending of money ; in the latter going before them by example. And as I have been your Honour's most devoted servant, so am I still your's, and you cannot easily lose me.

Having given thus far a character of himself ; let us now hear him tell, what a Blessed Reformation they had in so short a time as four years produced.

—Things every day grow worse and worse, you can hardly conceive or imagine them so bad as they are. No kind of *blasphemy, heresy, disorder, and confusion* ; but it is found *among* us, or *coming in* upon us. For we, instead of Reformation, are growing from one extreme to another ; fallen from Scylla to Charibdis ; from popish innovations, superstitions, and prelatical tyranny, to damnable heresies, horrid blasphemies, libertinism, and fearful anarchy. Our evils are not removed and cured, but only changed. One disease and devil hath left us, and another as bad is come in the room. Yea, this last extremity into which we are fallen, is far more high, violent and dangerous in many respects, &c. Have we not a reformation and worse things come in upon us, than ever we had before ? were any of those monsters heard of heretofore ; which are now common among us, and denying the scriptures, &c.—You have broken down the images of the Trinity, Virgin Mary, Apostles ; and we have those, who overthrow the doctrine of the Trinity ; oppose the Divinity of Christ ; speak evil of the Virgin Mary, and slight the Apostles—you have cast out the

Bishops and their officers ; and we have many that cast down to the ground all Ministers, in all the Reformed Churches. You have cast out ceremonies in the Sacraments, as the cross, kneeling at the Lord's Supper ! And we have many, who cast out the Sacraments of Baptism, and the Lord's Supper. You have put down Saints Days ; and we have many, who make nothing at all of the Lord's Day, and Fast-Days.

You have taken away the superfluous excessive maintenance of Bishops and Deans ; and we have many that take away, and cry down the necessary maintenance of Ministers. In the Bishops days, we had singing of Psalms, taken away in some places, conceived prayer and preaching ; and, in their room, anthems, stunted forms, and reading brought in. And now we have singing of Psalms spoken against, and cast out of some Churches. Yea, all public prayer questioned, and all Ministerial preaching denied. In the Bishops time, Popish innovations were introduced, as bowing at Altars, &c. And now we have anointing the sick with oil. Then we had Bishoping of children, now we have Bishoping of men and women, by strange laying on of hands.—In the Bishops days we had many unlearned Ministers : and have we not now a company of Jeroboam's Priests. In the Bishops days we had the fourth Commandment taken away ; but now we have all the Ten Commandments at once by the Antinomians ; yea, all Faith and the Gospel denied.—The worst of the Prelates in the midst of many Popish Arminian Tenets, and Popish Innovations, held many sound Doctrines, and had many commendable practices : yea, the very papists hold and keep to many articles of faith, and truths of God ; have some order amongst them, encourage learning, have certain fixed principles of truth, with practices of Devotion, and good works : but many of the Sects and Secretaries in our days, deny all principles of Religion, are enemies to all holy duties, order, learning, overthrowing all ; being veriginosi spiritus, whirlgigg-spirits. And the great opinion of an *universal toleration*, tends to the laying all waste, and dis-

solution of *all Religion*, and good manners, &c.—What swarms are there of all sorts of illiterate mechanic Preachers ; yea, of women, and boy-preachers ?—What liberty of preaching, printing of all errors, or for a toleration of all ; and against the directory, covenant, monthly-fast, Presbyterial government, and all Ordinances of Parliament in reference to Religion ?—These Sectaries have been growing upon us, ever since the *first year* of our sitting ; and have *every year* increased *more and more*.

No. VII. p. 385.

The five Lights of Walton.

The ensuing extract from Walker's History of Independency, Part II. p. 152, is, in its concluding paragraph, a testimony so much in point, and of so admonitory a nature, that it claims particular attention. As introductory to it, the Editor first presents the reader with the theory, of which it will be found an accurate exemplification, as it is luminously set forth in a publication, from which many citations have been made :—
 “ The Objections of a Churchman to uniting with the Bible Society,” by Mr. Nolan.

“ As the Church can have nothing to fear from the Bible, so it might have every thing to hope, if it were not for the effect of those favourite maxims, by which it is now recommended. For misled by the authority of such false principles, supported by as shallow deductions, mankind are *first* led to shake off their dependance on the *teacher*, and thence to shift it from the *book* upon their own *fancies* ; and, when these principles are carried to their *necessary* extent, come to supersede the

Bible as well as the ministry, and to fix their dependance on the *internal light*, not on 'the dead letter.' " P. 18.

" About the beginning of Lent last, Master Faucet, Minister of Walton upon the Thames, in Surrey, preached in his parish church after dinner; when he came down out of his pulpit it was twilight, and into the church came six souldiers, one of them with a lanthorn in his hand, and a candle burning in it; in the other hand they had four candles not lighted. He with the lanthorn called to the parishioners to stay a little, for he had a message to them from God, and offered to go up into the pulpit, but the parishioners would not let him; then he would have delivered his errand in the church, but there they would not hear him; so he went forth into the church-yard, the people following him, where he related to them, that he had a vision, and received a command from God to deliver his will unto them; which he was to deliver, and they to receive upon pain of damnation. It consisted of 5 lights:

" 1. That the Sabbath was abolished as unnecessary, Jewish, and meerly ceremonial: And here (quoth he) I should put out my first light, but the winds so high I cannot light it.

" 2. Tythes are abolished as Jewish and ceremonial, a great burden to the saints of God, and a disceuragement of industry and tillage: and here I shall put out my second light, &c. as aforesaid, which was the burden of his song.

" 3. Ministers are abolished as antichristian, and of no longer use now Christ himself descends into the hearts of his saints, and his spirit enlightneth them with revelations and inspirations: and here I should have put out my third light, &c.

" 4. Magistrates are abolished as useless, now that Christ himself is in puritie of spirit come amongst us, and hath erected the kingdom of the saints upon earth; besides, they are tyrants and oppressors of the liberty of the saints, and tie them to

laws and ordinances, meer humane inventions : and here I should have put, &c.

“ 5. Then putting his hand into his pocket, and pulling out a little Bible, he shewed it open to the people, saying, *Here is a book you have in great veneration, consisting of two parts, the Old and New Testament ; I must tell you, it is abolished : it containeth beggarly rudiments, milk for babes : but now Christ is in glory amongst us, and imparts a fuller measure of his spirit to his saints then this can afford ; and therefore I am commanded to burn it before your faces : so taking the candle out of his lanthorn, he set fire of the leaves. And then putting out the candle, cried, And here my fifth light is extinguished.*”

“ It became (says Hume, who cites this passage) a pretty common doctrine at that time, that it was unworthy of a *Christian* man to pay *rent* to his fellow-creatures : and *landlords* were obliged to use all the penalties of law against their tenants, whose conscience was *scrupulous*.”

No. VIII.

ADDITIONAL NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

Page 69. Note b.

THE following extract from a scarce and valuable work at once establishes the fact, that the fundamental principle of the Bible Society, (which discards the *Ministry* from the *Word*, and “sets up *private* interpretation of Scripture in opposition to the *received judgement* of the Universal Church,”) was the chief engine of Puritanical reform, and exemplifies the operation of that fundamental principle, from the first resistance which it engendered against Ecclesiastical Authority, to its consummation—the anarchy and confusion which ensued.

“And here, give me leave to observe unto you, how the *Presbytery* laid the way to *their own* and *our Church's* ruin; even by setting up *private* interpretation of Scripture, in opposition to the *received judgement* of the Universal Church. For, do not the Brownists, and the Anabaptists, under the name and notion of Independents, presently beat *them* with *their own* weapon? The Presbyterian abolisheth the Public Liturgy, and takes away Regular Ordination; brings in the Directory, and sets up Lay Elders; and all upon *this ground*, that what they did was conformed to the doctrine of the *Scriptures*; of whose interpretation *themselves* would be judges. But, at the heels of the Presbyterian, follows close the Independent, and, treading in *his* steps, at last *over-reacheth* him in his designs, and carries away his Helena from him; he pulls down the Classes, and the Synod, as *human* inventions and remains of Antichrist; denying that, *by the Scripture*, any Presbyters, or persons whatsoever, ought to have power over

the Churches of Christ, which are, by *Scripture-rule*, independent, in their government, to any secular or ecclesiastical power whatsoever. And for this they urge their *Scripture texts* with much heat of contention against the Presbytery, pleading this their *common* ground of interpreting Scripture by the *Spirit*, whose inspirations and revelations they pretend to, above what the Presbytery dare own or acknowledge.

“ As then in *joining* the authority of the Scripture with the judgment of the Church was our *Reformation*, so is it Satan’s subtlety, and the Jesuite’s design, both acting by the Enthusiasts, that in *dividing* the judgment of the Church from the authority of the Scriptures, may be our *ruin*. To the prevention whereof, what *God* hath joined together, let no *Man* put asunder; THE WORD OF GOD, and the MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH; for so saith Christ, in his instruction to his Apostles, ‘ Go ye, disciple all nations, baptising and *teaching*; teaching whatsoever *I* have commanded *you*.’ ”—Bishop Mossom’s Preacher Tripartite. Folio. 1657. Part III. p. 108.

The above passage is not the conjectural foreboding of a gloomy speculatist looking into futurity, nor is it the research of an historian investigating the occurrences of former times, but it is a narrative of the *present experience* of the individual who writes it; for the Sermon was preached between the years 1650 and 1652, during which interval Bishop Mossom, then a private Clergyman, kept together the congregation of St. Peter’s, Paul’s Wharf, which by the death of the pious and learned Richard Holdsworth, (the faithful attendant upon Charles the First both at Hampton-court and the Isle of Wight, and one of the most cruelly persecuted victims of the Puritans) was left without a Pastor. The volume, which is described by its author as partly devotional, partly consolatory, and partly designed “ to establish TRUTH AND PEACE against the then *present* heresies and schisms,” will in all these important respects well repay the labour of those who may be at the pains to peruse it.

P. 80. Note *.

As the fidelity of the statement of the disturbance, which took place at the Auxiliary Bible Society Meeting at Leicester on the 18th of April 1812, has been impeached in an insidious periodical publication called the *Christian Guardian*, (the conductor of which, it is believed, is a Clergyman of Leicester;) the Editor transcribes from a Letter, which the late Dean of Middleham addressed to him, dated Leicester, Dec. 5th 1813, the Dean's own account of that transaction. "I forget the exact terms in which the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and the other for Propagating the Gospel, were spoken of by Messrs. Robinson and Hall; but I thought those terms did so little justice to those long-established and venerable Institutions, that I rose to speak to what had occurred within my knowledge while resident in the West Indies. I was astonished at the *indifference* with which these facts were received; while, on the other hand, much *admiration* seemed to be excited at the marvellous and *sudden* conversion related by Mr. Robinson of a volunteer in the cavalry, by somebody's depositing a little Bible very snugly in the holster of his saddle, which he found on taking the pistol from its place. Upon my sitting down a young Clergyman of the cast self-culogised as Evangelical rose, and in his zeal for religious instruction urged some reflections against the University of Oxford as neglectful of the religious information of the young men; and as having (fifty years ago) persecuted six young men of Edmund Hall for paying particular attention to the reading of the Scriptures. When I rose to reply to this censure, instantly the cry of *Order* was uttered by a Clergyman of a certain cast, who was applauded by *clapping of hands*." The Dean adds that the young man, who cast the above reflections, was afterwards extremely concerned for his indiscreet censure.

P. 88. Note n.

In further illustration of the artifices put in practice to inveigle the inhabitants of any place, destined to be the theatre

of the Bible Society's operations, to assist at the encænia, and to become associated with it, the following specimens may be added to those already adduced.

In the Northampton Mercury of July, 1812, the following Advertisement was inserted:—

“ July 27, 1812.

“ *The Nobility, Clergy, and Gentry, are hereby informed, that it is resolved to form a BIBLE SOCIETY in the town of BRACKLEY and its vicinity, in connection with the Northamptonshire Auxiliary Bible Society. The REV. T. B. WOODMAN, the Rector, has appointed THURSDAY next for that purpose, and for receiving donations and subscriptions in aid of its funds.—The chair will be taken at eleven o'clock.*”

Such formality of notification as this, it will be naturally concluded, no one would have the hardihood to make without having received full authority to that purpose. But the fact is, that the above Advertisement was inserted without Mr. Woodman's consent, or even knowledge, who disapproved entirely of the measure; and the whole matter was dropped without any public apology for the liberty taken with his name.

In a pamphlet, entitled, “*TWENTY FACTS, IN ADDITION TO TWENTY ARGUMENTS,*” published at Winchester, it is stated, as one of the preliminary manœuvres to prepare the way for the formation of the Basingstoke A. S. that “an active agent” of the Institution called on the Clergyman of a large town, (it is believed Alton), requesting his support to it; and, on being informed that the Clergyman, as Curate, deemed it right on all matters that concerned any religious institutions, to consult his Vicar, was pleased very decently to insinuate, that he thought Clergymen, whether *Curates* or Vicars, who undertook the charge of parishes, were capable of judging for themselves, without being *dependant* upon others, in matters of spiritual concern. Failing, however, to pervert the Clergyman by his disorganising sophistry he proceeded in his canvass, and obtained two supporters and subscribers to his plan by leaving an *impression* on their minds that the Clergyman was *favourable* to

the measure; and afterwards obtained a subscription from a Lady in the neighbourhood by informing her that the New Society was countenanced by the Clergy in the neighbourhood, particularly by the *Clergyman* in question, and a vast number of his parishioners.

When the Cumberland A. S. was in preparation, a sort of menace was cast in the face of the Lord Lieutenant. Upon his refusing to lend his name to the measure he was asked by one of the party, who waited upon him for that purpose, what he was to say to *the Poor* when they were informed that his Lordship was adverse to the giving them the Bible? and upon the Bishop's continuing firm to his purpose of discountenancing the Institution, when strongly pressed to it by another zealous Auxiliarist, he was so broadly charged, to his face also, with obstructing the circulation of the Bible, that he felt it his duty to repel the outrage, by retorting upon the slanderer that if he repeated his foul calumny on the other side the door, he would have him prosecuted for defamation. The present Bishop of London, moreover, was no sooner seated upon the Bench, than advantage was taken, by the Hampshire Auxiliarists, of his having on the first formation of the Bible Society, and when the extensive distribution of Bibles was all that appeared of its designs, given it a donation: and without his knowledge and consent such an improper use was made of this act of liberality in a public address, that he felt it necessary to authorise a notification in the Winchester Paper to this effect, that, *he had ceased to consider himself a Member of the Society.*

These are additional instances of preparatory artifice and dissingenuity, but the whole progress of the Society is marked by contrivance and deceit. That this is no calumny has been abundantly shewn by the facts already before the public; but will further appear from the following statement, which the Editor has recently received of the late Auxiliary Meeting at Colchester.

“ The Annual Meeting was in the week before the last.

“ There was of course the usual parade of words. One day
 “ was devoted to the oratory of the *one sex*, and the next to
 “ that of the *other*, and every device was practised to draw
 “ strangers and visitors of both sexes into this vortex of
 “ misguided opinion. The profusion of benevolence *on these* *

* Numerous instances might be adduced in illustration of this important remark, as to the general tendency of these and similar Societies embracing foreign objects to captivate by their splendour persons of the best disposed but sanguine minds, and imperceptibly to divert their benevolence and estrange their attention from objects of a domestic nature possessing the strongest and most direct claim upon the affection and regard of Churchmen and indeed of the charitable of all denominations. The circumstances of Leicester, with reference to the different Charities to which it affords support, will furnish a case in point. In the reports of the Bible, the Church Missionary, and the Jew Converting Societies, it holds a distinguished place; Auxiliary Societies for each of these Institutions, and a Lady's as well as Gentleman's for the last, being incorporated in it, with all the &cs. of Patron, President, Vice Do. and Committee. These are Charities carrying the *thoughts and affections* in a great measure, to *distant* objects. There is one remaining of a *domestic* nature, viz. the education of the children of *its own* numerous poor; of the state of which a report was published last year, in which it is set forth, that out of “ a population of probably *two thousand five hundred* children between the ages of seven and fourteen not *five hundred* enjoyed the advantage of daily instruction; that two of its parishes were without *any* day school; and that a National Central School having been established to remedy this evil, though half the money annually contributed in the town towards gratuitous education would, upon the economical plan of the Madras System, supply the necessary resources, yet the School was *of necessity* given up, in some measure, for want of *local co-operation*. The state of gratuitous education throughout the county, as set forth in

“ and similar occasions leaves every other charity to starve
 “ throughout the year. One of their measures was on this
 “ occasion new, and like many others a little extraordinary.
 “ About 50 children of the Colchester National School were
 “ sent for, without any previous application to the Managing
 “ Committee, to attend the Meeting. It appeared however,
 “ that, though the *Managing Committee* had been kept in igno-
 “ rance of the intention, *the children* had been antecedently
 “ apprized of it; for they were extremely impatient and
 “ mutinous, that the master did not dismiss them for the
 “ purpose before the usual hour. These children, it is now
 “ discovered, have been members of a *penny* association for
 “ some time, and thus whilst receiving books from *one* Society,
 “ and instruction from *another* both belonging to the *Church*,
 “ have been beguiled into the contributing to an Institution
 “ now clearly demonstrated to be set in array *against* it.

Contrivance and deceit however is now giving place in some instances to presumption and defiance, for to such a pitch of effrontery have the inferior agents of the Bible Society arrived—that in one instance some time ago they not only published a notice of a Meeting to be held in Aldgate Church,

the same Report, exhibits an equally lamentable detail; the representation being to this effect, that out of *fifteen thousand* children between the above-specified ages, which is the computed amount of that class of its population, not more than *six thousand* receive any kind of instruction; and only *one thousand seven hundred* of these enjoy the benefit to a further extent than a Sunday School can impart it. Surely had St. Paul's solemn monition, and our Lord's example been attended to, provision would *first* have been made by the benevolent inhabitants of the town and county for *their own* household, before 800*l.* and upwards, the aggregate sum transmitted from the Auxiliary Committees to the above mentioned Societies, had been given towards *Converting Jews and Heathens*, and furnishing foreign nations with Bibles, &c.

without asking the consent of the Officiating Minister, but sent the notice to him for publication from the desk in the time of Divine Service, as the first communication of their design. And very recently the Rector of another Church in the centre of the metropolis, having refused his assent to its being profaned by the Meeting of a Bible Association, was deliberately informed, that the Association had the *power* of meeting there, and had only called upon him to ask his consent as a matter of *compliment*. His Correspondent adding that he should think it his duty to recommend to the Society to persevere in their design, unless he (the Rector) gave a *sufficient reason* for his refusal.

P. 96. Note p.

In consequence of the extensive publicity given to the Letter which supplied the information relative to the Hertford Auxiliary Meeting, detailed in note p., p. 97, Mr. Dealtry undertook, after the lapse of two months, to apply to the several speakers to furnish Reports of what they delivered; and after two months more completed (what is stated to be) his "painful task," and produced a fragment in fourteen 12mo. pages as his authentic statement; which, in the name of the Committee, he regrets that "*unavoidable circumstances*" had obliged him so long to delay.

The object of his labours is to convict the Letter of misrepresentation, and the "extreme incorrectness" which he endeavours to fix upon it, is exhibited in five distinct charges; the last of which must be expunged altogether, for the original Letter is in the Editor's possession, and the term "*Dissenting*" prefixed to "Debating Club," is not in it. With respect to the only material parts of it which are cited in the Note above referred to, and in Note ‡, p. 276. the difference between the Letter and the printed Report is, that in the printed Report Mr. Fordham is represented to express himself as "thinking favourably of the Bible Society *only* on account of the hope he entertained that it would destroy the

Established Church:" whilst in the Letter the limitation "*only*" is omitted, and the terms "patronised" and "overthrow" are substituted for "thinking favourably of" and "destroy," and no notice is taken of a previous declaration which Mr. F. made, that on all *other* accounts he is "a decided enemy" to the Institution. In the Letter, moreover, the feeling which this avowal excited in the Meeting is said to be "some disapprobation;" but in the printed Report the terms "universal disgust" are employed.

Again, in the printed Report it is represented to be twenty-five miles, but in the Letter forty, that Mr. Clayton stated himself to have travelled to attend the Meeting; and instead of speaking of the demolition of the Church as "a *secondary* object," according to the representation of the Letter, the comparison as stated in the printed Report is drawn the other way; and Mr. Clayton is alledged to say, not that the demolition of the Church is of *inferior* consideration to the circulation of the Bible, but that the circulation of the Bible is "an object of a *much higher and nobler character*" than the demolition of the Church.

Lastly, the profane conclusion of Dr. Olinthus Gregory's incitement to the Ladies to persevere in their exertions in behalf of the Bible Society, that then "God would be their lover," which stands in the Letter without any notification that it is not an original sentiment, appears in the more lengthened details of the printed Report to have been produced as a quotation from Tertullian.

Such is the attempt to impeach the fidelity of the Letter from which the Editor derived the important facts relative to the Hertford Auxiliary Meeting; and, even admitting all the corrections and qualifications adduced, he has full confidence that it will be considered generally as having compleatly failed, as far as respects every thing *material* in the allegation; but he is by no means prepared to yield the accuracy of the Letter to the framer of the printed Report in *any one instance*, except the solitary one of the term "patronise," for the spe-

cific use of which the gentleman, (from whose mouth the particulars stated in the Letter were taken, and who being present at the Meeting gave his account immediately subsequent to it,) cannot sufficiently charge his memory to make himself responsible.

But this is not an object worthy of a moment's contention, for when Mr. Fordham's and Mr. Clayton's developement of their respective sentiments, as reported by Mr. Dealtry, are taken in connection with the developement made at Birmingham, and detailed in note b. p. 361, and with the attempts made to excite popular odium against the Heads of the Church and the Parochial Clergy by the young Civilian at Newington, by Mr. Rowland Hill at Southwark, by Mr. Dillingham at Ipswich, by Mr. Eyton at Shrewsbury, and by the Dissenter at Stafford; the tendency of the Bible Society becomes too obvious to admit of misconception being any longer entertained upon this momentous subject.

For the first instance cited, the reader is referred to Note p. p. 96. the others follow in their order.

Rev. R. Hill.

"The monster that opposed them (the Auxiliary Bible Societies) no longer existed; his *head* had been cut off, and he should not proceed to deprive him of his *legs*. It was however absolutely necessary that somebody should visit the poor to know their wants; but could they expect the Archbishops, Bishops and Clergymen to trudge about on such errands! Oh, no; it was impossible;—it would occupy too much time, it would tire them to death," &c. &c. Extract from Mr. Rowland Hill's Speech at the Southwark Auxiliary Meeting, April, 1813. Mr. Archdeacon Jefferson, (from a note on whose charge the above passage is cited,) subjoins that the speech is "stated to have been received with *"loud and repeated applause;"* that it is reported in a form which implies that the "proceedings were accurately and officially taken; that it has "in no part been either contradicted or disclaimed, and there-

“ fore that it must be received as authentic, and as expressive
 “ of the sentiments of the Meeting.”

Mr. Dillingham.

“ Sorry he was to say, that the state of ignorance in which this part of the country was found, had been such as to call for all its (the Suffolk Auxiliary Bible Society’s) exertions; a circumstance which he attributed to the ill-judged practice of passing over, in the *pulpit*, the great and *leading doctrines* of the Gospel. Instead of *Gospel* preaching, the people had little more than *dry, cold, heathen morality*; which, though it might amuse the ear, could have little effect upon the heart.” Mr. Dillingham’s Speech at the Anniversary Meeting of the Suffolk Auxiliary Bible Society, held at Ipswich, November 9th, 1813, This gentleman subsequently states himself to be a Member of the Established Church.

Rev. J. Eyton.

Mr. Eyton’s speech, above referred to, is a tirade, from beginning to end, against all who have withstood the aggressions of the Bible Society, which is profanely described as “ the vine which the right hand of the Lord has planted,” whilst its adversaries are held up to popular odium under the images of the “ boar out of the forest which would root it up, and the wild beast of the field which would devour it ;” and Professor Marsh is singled out for exhibition as an example of “ the *infatuation* which marks the reasoning even of the most profound and accomplished scholar, who does not as a little child receive the kingdom of God.” But this is temperate language in comparison with what follows : as the speaker proceeds the fanatical phrenzy encreases, till at length he denounces all the Society’s adversaries as adopting a Satanical policy and as agents of Satan. Whoever desires to see a *chef d’œuvre* of *unchristian bitterness* aggravated by its ebullition in Scripture phraseology, has only to peruse this Speech—the effusion, the Editor is distressed to state, of a beneficed Clergyman of the Church of England. When delivered, it was preceded

by another from William Wickstead, Esq. which whilst, to an unwary hearer or reader, it seems to breathe a spirit replete with zeal for the sacred volume, does not pledge the speaker to the belief of a tittle of the Bible, and might have been spoken by a professed Unbeliever. As this Speech illustrates the leading position of the present work—the *generalizing tendency* of the Bible Society—and taken together with Mr. Eyton's forms such a pair of speeches as, the Editor would fain persuade himself, were never before addressed on one occasion to a professedly Christian assembly: they will be found at length in the Appendix, No. IX. as they appeared on two succeeding weeks in the Shrewsbury Chronicle.

The speech of the Dissenter above adverted to was delivered in the County Hall in Stafford, April 8th 1812, at a Meeting convened for the formation of an Auxiliary Bible Society. It remains however among those many flowers of eloquence, "more deserving," as Mr. Lister states it, "of public attention than any thing he delivered," which were yet withheld from accompanying his and Mr. Gisborne's speeches into the world. The Editor therefore cannot produce an accurate transcript of it from any printed Report, but its substance has been conveyed to him by more than one highly respectable channel of information; and both Mr. Lister and Mr. Gisborne are appealed to whether the individual in question did or did not, on the above occasion, diversify the eloquence of the day with a violent philippic against Dr. Marsh, and against the Church of England, in which (translating Voltaire's words) he encouraged the Meeting to hope they should soon be able to "*crush the wretch*," applying this term, in a confused flow of oratory, which left the devoted object not precisely defined either to Dr. Marsh or to the Church; and whether this anticipation of the result of the Bible Society's labours was not suffered to pass without *any* mark of disapprobation, or *any* reply from the supporters of the Institution?—Nay, if we may rely upon the statement in a subsequent Report, Mr. Gisborne himself must be chronicled amongst the accusers of his brethren: for, on the first anniversary of

the aforesaid Society, held June 30th, 1813, comparing together, what he is pleased to call, the "*Scriptural*" * and "the geographical map of the county," he holds up to public obloquy as its "*barren heaths*" and "*uncultivated moors*," those towns which have not established within themselves Bible Associations; and having, in a strain which the inconsideration of the moment can alone account for, exclaimed, "Where is the Branch Society of Burton? Where is that of Leek? Where is that of Newport?" as the *ne plus ultra* of his climax, he concludes, "Where, *above all*, is that of the *Cathedral City* of Litchfield, that place which is the great emporium of our *Ecclesiastical honours*, from whence the *Dignities* of our profession proceed, and which we should hope would be *foremost* in the prosecution of every *religious* good. See Staffordshire Advertiser, July 3d, 1813.

P. 108. Note *.

Mr. Cunningham has stated, in a letter to the Editor, that the passage extracted from his Speech, as printed in the Reading Mercury, is "not his," and has complained, that he "should have been judged, rather from the *unauthorised* Report of a Newspaper, than from the *authorised* Report of the Henley Meeting which has since been published." In proof of the accuracy of this "*authorised* Report," he proceeds to alledge, that it "contains the *only* PARTS of his *wholly unprepared* Speech, which he could persuade himself to print at the desire of the Meeting;" and this, though the Reader perhaps will scarcely credit it, is the reason assigned by *himself*, and the *only* one he assigns, for the deference which he demands as due to the Report pub-

* For some account of this *Scriptural* Geography, see p. 342. Note e. See, moreover, Barruel's Memoirs, Vol. iv. p. 165, where a Geography of the same description, termed *Illuminized Geography*, is referred to; from which, probably, the idea of the *Scriptural* Geography was originally taken.

lished by *authority*. In his zeal to secure the retraction of any charge against the Bible Society contained in the PRACTICAL EXPOSITION, he directs the Editor's attention to the *authorised* Report of the Meeting at Hertford. The Editor has paid, as will be seen above, due attention to that Report; and, amongst other things, he finds "*extreme caution*" recommended by the Committee to the Public in their enquiries, whether the Speeches actually delivered have not been "GARBLED." In the present instance enquiry is superseded; for the *garbling* of Mr. Cunningham's Speech in the *authorised* Henley Report stands recorded by his own hand. What degree of accuracy characterizes the Newspaper statement, the Editor does not pretend to determine: but it is well known to be the practice of the Bible Society Auxiliaries to have short-hand writers in attendance at their Meetings, and in some instances to have Committees to prepare for the public papers a full account of the proceedings of the day; and the lengthened detail of the Speeches at Henley, contained in the Reading Mercury of Oct. 12th 1812, has all the characters of a document of this description. Whether therefore, from that "*wholly unprepared*" state in which Mr. Cunningham professes that he delivered his sentiments on that occasion, the alledged reflection upon the University of Oxford did or did not inadvertently slip from him, is a point to be settled between himself and the conductor of the paper in question on whose authority it is adduced, and who, as far as appears, has not had such representations made to him as to induce him to retract it.

P. 116. Note a.

As it cannot but be useful that, in connection with the estimate exhibited of the *political* influence of the Bible Society abroad, the public should be made acquainted with the *persons* who are looked up to by *foreigners* as its *leading* members, and the *societies* with which foreigners consider it in alliance; the Editor is happy in having it in his power to state, that he has recently seen a printed letter from Boston, in

America, which throws considerable light upon this interesting subject.

It is addressed, in one *connected* superscription, to the "President and Directors of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and the Particular Baptist Missionary Society in England," and thus shews that in America these Societies are viewed as in a state of *affiliation*. It compliments the confederated body with a recognition of their *extensive domestic influence*, and then proceeds to interest them in behalf of a Mr. Jenkins, a writing master in Boston, who has completed and published a systematic plan of teaching the Art of Writing, of which he wishes to secure the copy-right in this country. To recommend his work to the patronage of the Society, he is represented as much attached to the *Bible* and *Missionary* schemes, and as disposed to appropriate to their support *one half* of the profits accruing from his production, should it be protected by their intervention from literary piracy, and have an extensive sale; and further to ingratiate himself with them, and to secure their active co-operation in his behalf, it is intimated that Rev. Melville Horne, Mr. Andrew Fuller, Mr. George Burder, and Dr. Ryland, have all been solicited by persons of consideration to the same effect.

Now, though there can be no doubt that the Managing Committee of the Bible Society have dismissed this application, so foreign to the purposes of their meeting, with the inattention which it merits; yet, besides the discoveries noted above, the application shews that the Bible Society's *foreign* friends are not without hope that they may derive *temporal* advantages from their connection with it; and it may perhaps help to account for a public insult*, it is conceived unintentionally,

* "This was indeed a proud day for this country. We had here assembled the *Heads* of our Church, and those under whose *auspices* the Word of God had lately been disseminated throughout the land, and throughout all nations; they were

offered to the Bench of Bishops, by blending them and the Bible Society, with which most of them are known to have disclaimed connection, in association together, in that truly Christian extension of British benevolence towards the German sufferers, to which the Venerable Bench were met to give their active countenance and support.

P. 122. Note c.

By a reference to the Ninth Report of the Bible Society, p. 44, 5, it will be seen that "a stereotype edition of the Welch Bible, similar to that of the largest 8vo. English Bible," was then announced as undertaken, in consequence of a general desire to that effect manifested throughout the Principality. In the Tenth Report it is remarkable that no notice is taken of the progress of this work; no eulogy passed upon the assiduity of those engaged in superintending the press; or upon the pains bestowed in *collating* the sheets with the *authorized* text of the Oxford Edition, and in *correcting every variation*: and it was only by a very minute inspection that the Editor discovered, in a note subjoined in the smallest characters to the list of the editions of the Scriptures on sale to subscribers, a communication made to them that "the Pica Welch Bible was *expected* to be ready for delivery in September." Now here is something behind the curtain which the public ought to be apprized of. To those who are at all acquainted with the attempts at *innovation* which the Bible Society has occasioned, the affair of the Welch Bible, one of its earliest transactions, will be familiar: and a reference to Mr. Dealtry's Vindication, Appendix C. and to the Supplement to that Appendix by Mr. Roberts, will furnish those who know it not with a full explanation. The material point to be

now assembled to give the best commentary upon the Word of God—practical humanity." Mr. Marten's Speech at Freemason's Hall, March 26, 1814, at the Meeting convened to form the Westminster Association. Extracted from the Times of March 28,

now adverted to is that the Managing Committee of the Bible Society confided the preparing it for the press to Mr. Charles of Bala, "a most noted leader among the sectaries," as Bp. Randolph describes him. This gentleman—a reformer, not merely in Religion, but even in the orthography of his native language, hailed the opportunity afforded him of producing a Welch text accommodated to his own standard of purity and correctness. Happily a few specimens of his *improved* readings made their appearance in some Welch publications, and information was sent to the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, and by its order forwarded to those of the Bishops who were Vice-Presidents of the Bible Society, in time to frustrate the design. A solemn investigation was instituted, in the course of which it was discovered that, by the Act of Uniformity, the Welch Bible was subjected to the revision and approbation of the Bishop of Hereford and the Welch Bishops; and thus the Committee extricated themselves out of their dilemma, at once complimenting Mr. Charles upon the value of his criticisms, and setting them aside.

It would scarcely be credited, that after this experience of Mr. Charles's propensity to innovation the Managers of the Bible Society could again so far commit themselves as to confide to his "judgement and ability" the carrying any future Edition of the Welch Scriptures through the press; but Mr. Charles was one of those worthies who had rendered "*very essential services*" to the institution, to whom moreover its highest *earthly* * honours had been in consequence awarded, and

* This distinction is become necessary, because, since the Practical Exposition was published, a *canonization* of one of its Members has taken place, and a *Calendar of Saints* of the Society has been begun. No insinuation is here intended against the religious and moral character of the truly pious individual adverted to; but the Editor conceives that no piety however exemplary can render it less than highly presumptuous

though it is not in the power of the Editor to calculate what influence these merits could have in obliterating former recollections; the fact is that the Pica 8vo. Welsh Bible, above adverted to, was confided to him; and the consequence has been that unable to restrain himself from

to pronounce decidedly on the *eternal* state of the departed: for God's "*heavenly rest*" is not man's to give, but is expressly reserved by our Lord himself to the appropriation of the Father at the Last Day, when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed.

The following advertisement, which was published not merely in the London, but it is believed in all the County Papers also, will explain the foregoing observations.

BRITISH and FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.—At a MEETING of the COMMITTEE of the BRITISH and FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY, held at the New London Tavern, Cheapside, on Monday, the 2d of August, 1813, the Right Hon. the CHANCELLOR OF HIS MAJESTY'S EXCHEQUER in the Chair, the following Resolution was unanimously adopted, and ordered to be published:—

“ It having pleased God, in the course of his Providence, to call GRANVILLE SHARP, Esq. to his heavenly rest, the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society feel a mournful pleasure in recording their veneration for his character, and their gratitude for his services. In him the Committee recognise the venerable person under whose auspices the Society was formed, the earliest and largest benefactor to their library, and one of the most regular, diligent, and useful attendants at the meetings for the transaction of business.—While the Committee acknowledge the obligations of the Society to the extent and accuracy of his Biblical learning, they feel it their duty to bear particular and affectionate testimony to the integrity of his mind, the simplicity of his spirit, and the philanthropy of his heart. The Committee desire to bless God for having conti-

carrying the improvements he meditated on the former occasion into effect, he altered, in the New Testament—the portion of Scripture first undertaken—many syllables at the hazard of the *true sense*, and many more in a manner perfectly indifferent in this respect; and it was not till nearly the whole of this part of the impression was struck off, that what he had been doing was discovered. And so hard of belief was the noble President, that such a deceit from such a quarter could have been practised upon the Society, that till a collation was made and transmitted, and conviction thus forced upon him that the charge was true, he rejected it with an honourable indignation.

It is not meant, by this statement, to surmise that any of the alterations were designed to affect the doctrine and discipline of the established Church. Mr. Charles had merely in view the introduction of a new system of orthography, upon which he doated; but the mischief which this variation will produce, unless the authorised orthography be restored, throughout the stereotype plates, in all places where it has been altered, will be in the proportion that this edition obtains circulation; and of this the Committee cannot be ignorant; for in the correspondence published from their own minutes by Mr. Dealtry, and cited above, and in a Letter from Mr. Davies, the gentleman whom they appointed as their “referee” under their former dilemma, they are distinctly told that the Critic, who introduces innovations verbal or literal into the Sacred Code, meddles with edge tools; “as the common people, who

nued so long among them an instrument of so great usefulness, and they trust that the benefit of his labours may be perpetuated and extended by the influence of his example.

(Extracted from the Minutes.)

JOHN OWEN,	} Secretaries.
JOSEPH HUGHES,	
CHAS. F. A. STEINKOPFF.	

form probably the majority of Scripture readers, seeing alterations adopted, without being qualified to judge of their merit, may thereby be led into an endless series of doubts and difficulties." This statement will explain why, in the last Report, the rapid progress towards a completion of the edition in question is passed over *sub silentio*; for being very handsomely printed, the Committee, it may fairly be presumed, would not otherwise have lost so favourable an opportunity of taking credit to themselves. The book is however now upon sale to subscribers only, it is feared with all its imperfections upon its head, and carrying with it wherever it goes a full justification of Bp. Randolph's censure of the former proceedings.

Connected with the subject of the Pica 8vo. Welch Bible is the Pica 8vo. English Bible, also "printed for the B. and F. Bible Society." Of this it is stated, in a pamphlet published at Winchester, and before cited, that "the heads of the chapters are curtailed to a single article, which is frequently the first, but often one of those that follow, and often also *entirely new modelled*." Now the fact is, that those who prepared this Pica English Bible for the press, found the headings reduced in the Cambridge Nonpareil 12mo. Bible to the brevity which they desired; and that they took it as their text book in this particular, varying from it however in many chapters, and in some substituting new headings of their own; of which that prefixed to Gen. vi. "The depravity of mankind" may be cited as an instance, as the Editor has not been able to find it in any of the numerous Bibles to which he has referred. Now, not to mention that there is this obvious apology to be offered in excuse for the liberty (possibly not a justifiable one) taken in the Cambridge Nonpareil 12mo. Bible, of abbreviating the *authorised* titles *, that the smallness of the

* There is but *one* Edition of the Bible below the 4to. size it is to be feared, issuing from the presses of either University, in which the original headings are preserved entire; and *that*

volume rendered any expedient to reduce the number of pages a great accommodation, which cannot be alledged for the same liberty taken in the Pica 8vo. ; it is surely a violation of the fundamental principle of the Bible Society, in their impressions of the English Bible, to make any variation from the copy sanctioned by authority ; and it is most important, that the practice should be discountenanced by whomsoever indulged ; for it is opening the door to pernicious innovation, and it is dismantling the authorized version of those useful references which the translators, with great judgment, provided to direct the attention of the unlearned reader to the most important passages upon which the several Articles of our Faith, and all our Formularies of Devotion are founded.

In illustration of the former evil, the practices of some Sec-
 tarian Editors of Family Bibles, animadverted upon by Dr. Holland, in the notes to his excellent Visitation Sermon, may be adduced ; whom he states to be in the habit of so altering the summaries in question, without apprizing the reader of the alteration, as to make these tables of contents suit their own peculiar notions—and, in illustration of the latter, it will be sufficient to state a piece of intelligence, furnished by Mr. Aspland in his PLEA FOR UNITARIANS addressed to the Editor, that a few, though but a few, Unitarians have been kept out of the Bible Society, because that in two particulars its proceedings did not tally with its principle, the first of them being, that “ professing to circulate the Bible ‘ without note or comment,’ the authorised version, which only they use as far as circulation in this kingdom is concerned, has a perpetual commentary, in the form of *tables of contents* at the head of each chapter ; which, it is feared, may be mistaken by the common reader for a part of Scripture itself, and though not often directly systematic, are yet sufficiently so to give a *bias* to the

leaves the curtailment apparently without an assignable cause as far as respects all 8vo. Editions ; for it is 12mo. only, and yet the increased bulk of the volume is not perceivable.

minds of such readers as are not guarded by previous knowledge." (Aspland's Plea, p. 25.) This *bias* the Editor, for his part, wishes to see retained; and therefore, though a stumbling stone to a few Unitarians, who would otherwise, it seems, have joined the Bible Society, he cannot but regret that it is brought, in the Pica 8vo. Bible which they have published, within one remove of total suppression.

P. 176. Note f.

The necessity of renewing the debate, respecting the provision made in the constitution of the Bible Society for preserving in the Managing Committee the balance of power between the Churchmen and the Dissenters, is now compleatly superseded, for Mr. Simeon has avowed, not indeed in so many words, but in terms which necessarily involve the implication, that he is a *Dissenter* from the Church in one of its *fundamental* Articles, in which he symbolizes with the Methodists, and that from his extensive acquaintance with the *Clerical* Members of the Bible Society, he is *authorised* to declare, that though there may and must be shades of difference between those who come nearest to each other, the sentiments of the *great majority* accord with *his*, there being few, *very few* he believes, who *materially* differ from him. See this important disclosure set forth, and well commented upon, Marsh's 2d Letter to Simeon, p. 11 to 19. There can be no doubt that Mr. Simeon's confidence has here far outrun the extent of his information. But the orthodox and exemplary Clergy of our Church ought to be apprized to what they expose themselves by remaining in this association, that they may be induced to come out of it from a just sense of what is due to their own consistency of character.

P. 236.

The active ingenuity which the advocates of Socinianism are now displaying in their attempts to cry down the leading articles of the Christian Faith; and the lively interest which they at the

same time take in the success of the Bible Society; together with the encouragement held out to them by the promoters of that Institution, to become their associates, are facts, which have been established in that part of the preceding volume to which this note refers, it is believed, to the *painful* satisfaction of every unprejudiced reader.

That part of it had scarcely passed the press, when the Editor's apprehensions, intimated p. 228 Note o, were verified, by the repeal of those statutes which expressed the abhorrence of this Christian nation against the impugnors of the doctrine of the Trinity, and other blasphemers of God; two of these statutes, but they cognizable only in the Scotch Courts and completely dormant, expressing this abhorrence it is admitted with unwarrantable severity.

The Repeal took effect, as the last act of the Session on the 21st of July 1813, and on the 30th of that month the Unitarian Society met, and passed the following Resolutions.

UNITARIAN SOCIETY.—*At a SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING of the UNITARIAN SOCIETY for PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE, and the PRACTICE of VIRTUE, by the Distribution of Books, convened for the purpose of taking into consideration the Act lately passed for the "Relief of Persons who impugn the Doctrine of the Trinity," holden at the Chapel in Essex-street, July 30, 1813.*

The Rev. THOMAS BELSHAM in the Chair.

The following Resolutions moved by Isaac Solly, Esq. and seconded by Sir Charles Colville, were adopted:—

Resolved, I. That the Members of this Society view with great satisfaction the recent success of a measure, which more than twenty years ago they solicited in vain, though supported by the transcendant abilities of the late Mr. Fox; and they congratulate each other and the friends of civil and religious liberty in general, that by the Bill which has lately passed for the "relief of those who impugn the doctrine of the Trinity," persons who profess their dissent

from that article of the Established Creed are no longer exposed to severe and ruinous penalties, but are placed under the protection of the Law.

II. That the Members of this Society are truly grateful to the Legislature for the liberality and unanimity with which this important measure was received: and for the readiness and alacrity with which, when the original Bill was lost, through a technical informality, a new and amended Bill was allowed to be introduced; was expedited through the necessary forms, and was passed by both Houses in time to receive the Royal Assent previously to the prorogation of Parliament.

III. That this Society hail the present measure, as an auspicious prelude to that happy day, when all penal laws and political restrictions on religious grounds shall be for ever abolished; when an invidious and limited Toleration shall give way to Universal Religious Liberty; and when all, without distinction, shall be entitled by Law to the possession of those civil and political privileges which are the Birthright of Britons.

IV. That the Thanks of this Society be given to that able and enlightened Member of Parliament, William Smith, Esq. for the generous zeal with which he has stood forward, upon this and many other occasions, to vindicate the rights and liberties of his fellow-subjects; for the promptitude and cheerfulness with which he undertook to introduce this important measure into Parliament; and for the attention and perseverance with which he watched and supported the measure in every stage of its progress, till the Bill, which entitles its author to a conspicuous rank in the honourable records of civil and religious liberty, received the Royal Assent.

V. That the Chairman be desired to communicate these Resolutions of the Society to Mr. Smith.

THOMAS BELSHAM, Chairman.

The Chairman having left the chair, it was moved by Sir Charles Colville, and seconded by Isaac Solly, Esq.

That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to the Rev. T. Belsham, for his conduct in the Chair, and the great zeal which he has on this,

and every other occasion evinced, both by his exemplary conduct and his masterly writings, for the interests of the Christian Religion.

It was then moved by James Young, Esq. and seconded by Sir Charles Colville,

That the Thanks of this Society be given to the worthy Secretary, the Rev. J. Joyce, for the promptitude that he evinced in summoning the Meeting upon this important occasion, and for his sincere and zealous discharge of the duties of his situation.

J. JOYCE, Secretary.

Morning Post, August 6, 1813.

In this string of Resolutions, the acclamation of victory, and the manifesto of continued discontent and further aggression, there is much to observe; but it is so obvious, that it need not be pointed out. There is however one particular which the public ought to know, that they may understand what value to attach even to the *officially* accredited documents of this Religious Body.

In their second Resolution there is this statement, that “when the *original* Bill was lost through a *technical* informality, a new and amended Bill was allowed to be introduced; was expedited through the necessary forms, and was passed by both Houses in time to receive the Royal Assent previously to the prorogation of Parliament.”

Now in this short passage *two* mis-statements are made; for, in the first place, there were *three* instead of *two* Bills brought before Parliament. The two former of which, when they had passed the Commons, were both successively withdrawn from the Lords, upon intimation made that if brought into that House they would be thrown out: and it was not on account of a mere “*technical* informality” that this fate would have awaited them, but on account of the introduction of what were deemed by some of the Lords such *offensive* terms into the repealing clauses, that they declared their determination to

make a decided opposition to the Bill, unless those were expunged.

It might well be thought, that in the above placard the Socinians had sufficiently exulted in their success, and notified their future intentions ; but three weeks only were suffered to elapse, when they again thought proper to glory in their achievements, and to cheer each other to those exploits in impiety, which they had at length obtained a licence to publish, without fear of legal castigation ; and the following Resolutions appeared.

UNITARIAN FUND.

AT a Special General Meeting of the Subscribers to the Unitarian Fund, holden at the KING'S HEAD TAVERN, in the POULTRY, on FRIDAY, August 20, 1813.

MR. ALDERMAN GOODBEHERE IN THE CHAIR.

Resolved Unanimously,

I. THAT we conceive it to be the right of every man—a right derived immediately from the Almighty Creator—to form his own religious opinions, to profess them amongst his neighbours and fellow-creatures, and to act upon them in the exercises of divine worship ;—that in religious opinion, profession and worship, as held, avowed and observed in Great Britain, there is no interruption of the peace of civil Society, and no call for the interference of the Magistrate, who cannot affect to Tolerate, without assuming authority to Persecute :—and that all Penal Statutes, whether they enact fine or imprisonment, or positive bodily suffering, or whether they declare civil disabilities, exclusion and privation, on the ground solely of such opinion, profession and worship, are manifest invasions of natural right, and equally repugnant to the Christian Religion, and to the spirit of the British Constitution.

Resolved Unanimously,

II. That as Unitarian Christians, distinguished from our fellow Christians only by the faith and worship which we have learned from the Holy Scriptures,—that the God and Father of the Universe is one Being, Mind, and Person, the sole Object of Religious Wor-

ship, and that Jesus Christ is the chosen, honoured, and divinely-endowed Messenger of God,—we had long felt the injustice of being excluded by positive statute from even that share of Religious Liberty which was allowed to the mass of Protestant Dissenters ;—for which exclusion, we humbly conceive no reason was to be found in our character and conduct as Subjects and Citizens, wherein we have never yielded, and can never yield, the superiority to any denomination or class of our countrymen.

Resolved Unanimously,

III. That we congratulate our Unitarian Brethren on the Bill lately passed into a Law for the Relief of those who impugn the Doctrine of the Trinity : the British Legislature having thus readily performed an act of justice denied by the House of Commons, twenty years ago, to the earnest and eloquent application of that able and enlightened, and ever-memorable Statesman, the late Mr. Fox.

Resolved,

IV. That in common with all the friends of religious liberty and just government, we rejoice that persecuting laws, enacted at the era of the Revolution, in direct violation of the principles then asserted, and which, though too cruel and impolitic to be often enforced, have yet remained for a century the disgrace of the statute book, are at length expunged, amidst a general acquiescence in the justice and even necessity of their repeal.

Resolved Unanimously,

V. That our best acknowledgements are due to William Smith, Esq. M.P., for his compliance with the request, originating in our Committee, to bring the subject of the legal insecurity of Unitarians before Parliament, and for his unremitting attention to the Parliamentary progress of the Bills, which he accordingly brought into the House of Commons, for the repeal of those Penal Statutes which had so long rendered Unitarians liable to be deprived of civil protection merely on the ground of their religious profession.

Resolved Unanimously,

VI. That we trust the period is advancing, and would willingly hasten its arrival, when not only Christians of every description, but also our countrymen at large, shall be alike free to profess and de-

send their opinions, and all equally partake the civil rights of Britons.

Resolved Unanimously,

VII. That as Unitarian Christians feared not to profess and inculcate what they esteem the Doctrines of the Gospel, though liable to the infliction of severe penalties, it is their incumbent duty, now that they are placed within the protection of the Law, not to relax their efforts, but rather to extend those exertions which well consist with the peace and order of Civil Society and the purest principles of Christian Charity.

Resolved Unanimously,

VIII. That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to the Committee of the Unitarian Fund, for their zealous discharge of the trust committed to them, and for their watchfulness over the Interests of the Unitarian Body.

Resolved Unanimously,

IX. That the above Resolutions be printed, and that a Copy be sent to every Member of the Society within the reach of the Two-penny Post.

Resolved Unanimously,

X. That the Resolutions now passed be advertised in the MONTHLY REPOSITORY,—a Publication which, for the support it gives to the cause of Free Enquiry and Religious Liberty, is entitled to the countenance of the Unitarian Body, and particularly of this Society.

Resolved Unanimously,

XI. That the above Resolutions be advertised also in the principal Periodical Publications and the Newspapers, at the discretion of the Committee.

SAMUEL GOODBEHERE, Chairman,

JOHN CHRISTIE, Esq. having taken the Chair, it was

Resolved Unanimously,

That the Thanks of the Meeting be given to Mr. Alderman Goodbehere for his conduct in the Chair, and for his general support of the rights and liberties of his fellow citizens and fellow countrymen of all denominations.

These resolutions also speak for themselves; and, considering the spirit which they breathe, and the purposes which they unfold, it is very consolatory to observe that, as Sir Charles Colville and Mr. Solly were obliged to ring changes with each other in moving and seconding the former resolves, the worthy Knight being even a third time put in requisition as Mr. Young's supporter; so on the latter occasion the Chairman and Mr. Christie are the only characters sufficiently conspicuous to appear. The truth is, that whatever the active members of this religious body may have in their heart, it would be perfectly harmless, but for the support and furtherance which they at this time derive from their incorporation in the Bible Society, and from the restless exertions of a political party.

In prosecution of these Resolutions, especially of the seventh, the following projet of a Course of Socinian Lectures was very extensively circulated early in the last winter, being a modification of the plan of the Hackney Conferences, adapted to the Sunday.

A Course of Sunday Evening Lectures, which will be delivered at the Unitarian Chapel, St. Thomas's Street, Southwark: commencing December 5th, 1813.—Service to begin at Half-past Six o'Clock, precisely.

1813.

- Dec. 5. Rev. THOS. REES. *God the Father, the only God.*
 12. Rev. ROB. ASPLAND. *God the Father, the only object of Religious Worship.*
 19. Rev. J. GILCHRIST. *Jesus Christ, a Man approved of God.*
 26. Rev. JOHN EVANS. *On Faith.*

1814.

- Jan. 2. Rev. W. VIDLER. *Jesus Christ, the Mediator between God and Man.*

- Jan. 9. REV. THOS. REES. *Scriptural Doctrine of Reconciliation, contrasted with the Popular Doctrine of Atonement.*
16. REV. ROB. ASPLAND. *The Sufferings of Jesus Christ the Sufferings of a Man.*
23. REV. J. GILCHRIST. *Jesus Christ, the Head over all things to the Church.*
30. REV. JOHN EVANS. *Hope.*
- Feb. 6. REV. W. VIDLER. *Eternal Torments not a Doctrine of Divine Revelation.*
13. REV. THOS. REES. *The Doctrine of Original Sin, as defined in modern Creeds.*
20. REV. ROB. ASPLAND. *The Influence of the Holy Spirit.*
27. REV. J. GILCHRIST. *No Mysteries in Revealed Religion.*
- Mar. 6. REV. JOHN EVANS. *Charity.*
13. REV. W. VIDLER. *The eternal Destruction of the Wicked not consistent with the Design of Christ's Mission.*
20. REV. THOS. REES. *The Resurrection of Christ, the earnest of the Resurrection of all Mankind.*
27. REV. ROB. ASPLAND. *The Man Christ Jesus, the Judge of Quick and Dead.*

C. STOWER, PRINTER, HACKNEY.

Such (as it is stated in an excellent Letter published in *The Morning Post* of the 28th of August last, in consequence of the last string of resolutions) "is the public attack upon the Religion of the Nation;" with which in *requital*, it is presumed, for the abrogation of penalties the Socinians have carried on,

during the last eighteen months, the *hostilities* which it has been already demonstrated, they had previously commenced against it.

In those resolutions, “ by a direct and necessary inference, they declare that theirs is the *true* Faith, and that the Faith of the Church of England is a *false* one ;” and together with the faith of the Church of England they necessarily impeach *that* which the *Bible Society* have over and over again declared that it is the *sole* object of their Institution to inculcate, and without pledging themselves to inculcate which those dignified Patrons, to whose countenance they owe so much, would have been among their first and most zealous opponents.

The Socinians, however, in the face of all this, continue with increased zeal to eulogise the Bible Society, to flock to its associations, and to give it their unqualified support. The Editors of “ A NEW DIRECTORY FOR NON-CONFORMIST CHURCHES,” evidently a Socinian publication, printed for Johnson, 1812, were at that period so well aware of the tendency of the Bible, and the Lancasterian Societies, which they consider as *closely connected*, that at the termination of their seventh Chapter setting forth the motives for using Scripture forms of Worship, “ they cannot conclude,” they say, “ this part of their work, without expressing their satisfaction in the wonderful success of those two recent institutions ; and rejoicing also in the animated and successful defences of both, by Clergy and laity of *all* denominations, against the bigotted, but feeble attempts of those who are afraid to trust the Bible by itself, lest it should betray the readers into error !” and they assign this as the reason of their rejoicing, that they cannot but hence encourage the cheerful hope that *Scriptural* worship and *Scriptural* religion, will rapidly gain ground, and thus the prophecy be fulfilled, Jer. xxxii. 39. “ *I will give them one heart and one way,*” i. e. the way of *indifference* to *all* the articles of faith, or to express it in one word, the way of *Deism*.*

* It is mentioned as one of the devices of Weishaupt by Professor Robison in his PROOFS OF A CONSPIRACY, p. 215,

At a more recent period, Mr. Aspland, in his PLEA FOR UNITARIAN DISSIDENTS addressed to the Editor, in consequence of the investigation which is here continued, nas in the strongest terms avowed the *attachment* of the whole Socinian body to the Bible Society; and lest the circumstance, that many have with-held their names from its muster-roll should be misconstrued, he lets out the secret that *policy* has laid restraint upon their *inclination*—that their very *attachment* makes them *absentees*—operates upon many of them (to use his own words) “to *abstain* from the pleasure, and *deny themselves* the honour of being amongst its *most public and zealous promoters*, lest their appearing *publicly* in its cause should furnish its enemies with a *new topic* of invective, and a *convenient handle* of reproach; and, lest the odium so industriously heaped upon them should be also made to bear on an Institution, as abhorrent to some of the Members of the Church as Socinianism itself,” (Plea, p. 24, 5.) and in another place, (p. 37,) he very candidly states this as the *ground* of their attachment; that “the *spirit* of the Bible Society is a *virtual* concession to their plea,” (viz. “that if they dissent from the greater part of the Christian world in points of *Faith*, they are one with it in the reception and the observance of the rules of *moral duty*,” and therefore they “cordially hail it as an earnest of the speedy approach of the period, when “all mankind’s concern,” according to the poet, will be that which, in the judgment of an Apostle, is greater than “faith,” namely, CHARITY. Not the charity however of the *Apostle*, which amongst its other characteristics bears this distinctive mark, that it “rejoices in the *truth*,” but *modern* charity, which first “*changes* the truth into a lie,” and then by a *general* compromise *discards* it altogether from its affections—the *speculative love* in short of the *whole* human race, combined

that “he employs the Christian Religion which he thinks a falsehood as the means of inviting Christians of *every* denomination, and gradually cajoling them, by clearing up their *Christian* doubts in succession, till he lands them in *Deism*.”

with *practical ferocity* against *individuals* and *enmity* against *God*.*.

Such then is the additional testimony borne by Socinians themselves in the interval between the publication of the PRACTICAL EXPOSITION and the present time, to substantiate those two very materials points, in support of which so powerful a body of evidence has been already adduced; viz. the *lively interest* they take in the success of the Bible Society, and their *hostility* against the Christian Faith.

To establish further the painful fact, that under these circumstances they are encouraged to come in, and by Members of the Church of England too belonging to the Institution, it might be sufficient to mention what Dr. Marsh, (Reply to Dr. Milner, p. 138.) very happily characterises as the Dean of Carlisle's *tenderness* towards Socinians †; for lest he should give

* See the Bishop of London's dignified, eloquent, and elaborate Charge, recently published, in which his Lordship, taking a comprehensive and profound survey of the present state of Religion in this kingdom, thus speaks of Unitarianism: "I do not hesitate to aver my conviction, that the profession of Unitarian tenets affords a convenient shelter to many; who would be more properly termed Deists; and who, by the boldness of their interpolations, omissions, and perversions, by the indecency of their insinuations against the veracity of the inspired Writers, by their familiar levity on the awful Mysteries of Religion, and their disrespectful reflections on the person and character of their Saviour, are distinguished from real Unitarians, and betray the true secret of the flimsy disguise which they have assumed as a cover from the odium of avowed infidelity." P. 15.

† Calvinism and Socinianism, upon a superficial observation, appear such contradictory religious opinions, that it is not perhaps conceived to be possible to make them approximate, or bear any relation, to each other. Professor Marsh, however,

them *offence*, he speaks of their IMPROVED VERSION OF THE SCRIPTURES as only *deemed* to be spurious, and expresses him-

has produced evidence which shews that they have been considered *kindred* heresies, bottomed upon the *same* false principle; for he brings forward two eminent Lutheran divines of the sixteenth century; the one of whom, Albert Grawer, wrote a work, entitled, *Polemica sacra contra Calvinianos et Photinianos*, the object of which was to prove that every Calvinist is a Photinian; "that is," says the Professor, "at any rate worse than an Arian, if not as bad as a Socinian; and the very ground" he proceeds, "on which Grawer built his proof of this charge was, that Calvin taught the doctrine of *absolute election*." The other, John Gerhard, Professor of Divinity at Jena, supported the same argument; for in his Chapter *De causâ meritorîâ justificationis*, he speaks of *absolutum electionis decretum quod propugnant Calviniani*, as follows, "*Si enim absolutâ Dei voluntate salvandi electi sunt ad vitam æternam, utique etiam absolutâ Dei voluntate peccata illis remittuntur, vel certe remitti potuerunt, neque opus erit Christi satisfactione et merito. He then concludes, stante dogmate de absoluto prædestinationis decreto non posse Neo-photinianorum errorem solide refelli.*"

In support of what is alledged by Albert Grawer and Gerhard, particularly the latter of them, the opinion of Grotius may be adduced, as it is cited with decided approbation by Bishop Bull in his *Examen Censuræ*, cap. vii. sect. 23. "*Sentio tandem, quàm non temere dudum pronuntiaverit vir longè doctissimus: 'Satisfecisse Christum pro hominum peccatis, doctrinam esse veram et Catholicam; sed mirè à Calvinî discipulis depravatam; ita ut eorum error errore Socini in hac re sit periculosior.'*"

A further appeal something to the same effect may be made to Dr. Thomas Jackson's Commentaries on the Creed, Book X. Chap. 49. where the degradation of our Lord's character,

self so cautiously, as effectually to secure *himself* from being implicated with those whom he charges with holding this opinion; he moreover *eulogises* them, as displaying, by their “*co-operation* with the other friends of the Bible Society, a notable instance of candour and moderation worthy of the notice of believers of *all* denominations,” and as being that religious body “who have made the only *real* sacrifice” by joining the Institution—an “event” at which “*Churchmen*,” he

involved in the Calvinistic dogma of *absolute* decrees, is forcibly pointed out in several particulars.

Indeed Socinus himself, according to the quotations from his Controversial Treatise, *De Jesu Christo Servat.* par. 2. cap. 7. to be found in the *Apologia pro Harmonia* of Bishop Bull, sect. 1. pericop. 9. delivers, as his construction of our Lord’s vicarious sacrifice, such a notion of it as seems to afford considerable countenance to the affinity in question. Bishop Bull collects his sentiments and gives the following summary of them: “*Scilicet hæc constans ejus (Socini) doctrina, Christum non ideo mortuum fuisse, ut aliquid nobis impetraret à Deo promittendum; sed tantummodo ut promissorum, jam quasi sponte, et absque propitiatione ullâ interveniente, à Deo factorum, fidem nobis faceret.*”

This is not the place, neither is it the Editor’s intention to enter into the question which these allegations might raise; but when Calvinists are making such advances to fraternise with Socinians, and when, besides the general disposition manifested by Socinians to fraternise with them, there is amongst the Auxiliary proceedings now before the world, an instance of a Socinian eulogizing a Dignitary of the Church for having distinguished *Gospel preachers* with his particular patronage and countenance; this Socinian, moreover, having himself presented a living to a highly Calvinistic protégè of the leaders of the Party self-designated Evangelical; it does provoke enquiry after latent affinities between these Heretical systems.

presumes, "will surely be glad," and will "approve the *principle* which led to it." Milner's *Strictures*, p. 150, 175.

What that *principle* is, Professor Marsh draws forth to light from beneath the veil of the Dean's misrepresentations, by putting the *home* question to him, whether the Socinians and the Edinburgh Review are not incited by the *same* motive to the zeal they display in the cause of the Bible Society, and whether that motive is "a regard for the *Bible*, or a regard for the *Society*, that is, for its *levelling principle*?"

The compilers of the Socinian Directory and Mr. Aspland have both answered the question: yet the readiness to incorporate Socinians * remains unabated, in proof of which, in addition

* That Mr. Secretary Owen sympathises with the Dean of Carlisle in his *tenderness* towards Socinians, and has guaranteed to them, in common with Jews and Turks, a cordial reception into the Bible Society, is established upon evidence which no one has ventured to gainsay, and a record of the important fact will be found, p. 218. note k. Since the occurrence there related, a new demonstration of the Secretary's *tenderness* towards them has been made, at the costly sacrifice of his ingenuousness as a professor of the Christian Faith; for in the hortatory conclusion of his speech, at the Cambridge Auxiliary Meeting, Nov. the 18, 1813, he employs such accommodating language to set forth the ultimate end of the Bible Society's labours, that professing Socinians, whether really such, or *Deists in disguise*, together with their fore-named associates, Jews and Turks, may, by a trifling reservation as to the specified means, cordially concur in promoting that end. His exhortation to his clerical brethren, met in conclave in the bosom of a Christian University, is, that they "should not consider their object accomplished, or their duty discharged, till enlightened by the Gospel of HIS HONORABLE, TRUE AND ONLY SON, all the world shall have learnt to worship THE FATHER EVERLASTING, and Heaven and Earth

to the Dean's authoritative testimony, the following new facts may be adduced. That a *Socinian teacher*, in a populous town in Hampshire, was applied to by one of the *principal promoters* of the Auxiliary Bible Society in that county to exert himself to the utmost in *its* promotion. (Twenty Facts, &c. p. 34.) That the first report of the Bible Society's proceedings at Norwich was drawn up by a *Socinian teacher* of Hapton, in Norfolk (private communication). That "a person of a prepossessing address and fascinating elocution, who is a *professed Socinian*, and who even proposes serious doubts of the authenticity of the Scriptures, was *retained*—the expression," adds the reciter of it, "is not inappropriate—to attend a very respectable and populous Meeting, in order that he might represent, in glowing colours, the blessings of that *Gospel*, the *truth* of which he scarce believes. What are we to think," continues Mr. Clapham, upon reporting this, "of a cause which requires such a *detestable* recommendation and such an *impious* support?"—Extract from Sermon preached at primary Visitation of Lord Bishop of Chester, by Rev. S. Clapham. Rivingtons. 1814.

To put the authenticity of this decisive but horrid fact beyond all controversy, the Editor has obtained from Mr. Clapham, his authority to assure the public that the fact is altogether "*unquestionable*," though, from a delicacy towards private feelings, he waives publishing the individual's name.

shall be filled with the MAJESTY OF HIS GLORY." (See Report, edited by Rev. George Cornelius Gorham, Fellow of Queen's College, p. 53.) The comprehension of the universe in one diversified community of all persuasions, is the splendid achievement on which the Bible Society is engaged. A universal language, defecated of every peculiar idiom, having therefore become indispensable, it may, with some probability, be supposed, from the above specimen, that Mr. Secretary Owen is engaged in framing the vocabulary.

But a more offensive and disgusting circumstance remains yet to be brought forward, and which the Editor produces in the same form in which he received the communication. It is a sequel to the proceedings at Uxbridge—exhibiting in one point of view the most *aggravated outrages*, which perhaps were ever committed in a Christian country against its *Religion*, and the most *impenetrable complacency* in a Society, holding itself up as Christianity's *Champion* and *Apostle*, towards the infuriated reviler—a member of its *own body*, and still *cherished* in its bosom. The detail is as follows:—

“ In addition to the statement, on the subject of the Uxbridge Meeting, as given to the public in your first edition, I think it important they should know the following particulars.

“ That, besides being personally a Socinian, Mr. Clarke has actually, and without any attempt to conceal the fact, *pasted* his obnoxious tracts in the *Society's* Bibles, thus breaking directly the fundamental rule, that the authorized version of the Holy Scriptures should be distributed *without note or comment*;—that the Members of the Society at Uxbridge, do not scruple to acknowledge that such conduct in Mr. Clarke is a violation of the rule, and that he *ought not* in consequence to continue a Member;—that he notwithstanding *does so continue*, and that *no step* has been taken to remove him;—that, not content with holding opinions fundamentally opposite to the Established Church, he has adopted the most offensive means to propagate and proclaim them;—that, in the first instance, he exerted all his influence to prevail upon a person, who lives in the village of Hillingdon, to permit him to open a Socinian School and Library in his house, as being the nearest to the village *Church*;—that, failing in this, he afterwards procured another house, facing the public high-road, at its entrance into the town of Uxbridge, where a school and library have been established at his own expence, the children (fifteen in number) clothed, and Unitarian books offered to all, who may wish to

read them;—that, in particular, he has caused to be placed *over this house, in characters large enough for every passenger in every coach to read with ease*, the greater part of the texts on which the Socinians found their doctrine, and other sentences, to which he has chosen to affix the names of Luther and Calvin; in one of which it is said, that the word, TRINITY, is “barbarous, insipid, *profane*.” *

“I may add to these facts, that it has been *expressly* admitted to me by some, who take a *considerable lead* in the proceedings of the British and Foreign Bible Society, that it was much to be lamented, that Mr. Clarke could not be *induced* to withdraw, and that steps had been taken to *persuade* him to do so. Yet the truth is, that neither the Parent Society, nor the Auxiliary Society at Uxbridge, have had the *courage and consistency* to strike off from the list of their Subscribers the name of a person, who has acted in the way I have now mentioned; and who is moreover acknowledged on all hands to have violated their *primary and fundamental law*.”

* That public decency continues to be outraged with increased effrontery, either by the individual above-mentioned, or by some of his adherents, the following advertisement, taken from *The Times* of November 24, puts out of all question:—

THE SCRIPTURES.—*This Day is published, Price 1s.*

ONLY FAIR PLAY for the SCRIPTURES; or, a few words of apology for Scriptural or strictly Protestant Christianity. Sold by J. Bell, Oxford-street; and R. Rees, Pall-Mall. Of whom may be had, Brief Hints to Scriptural Christians; or the Liturgy of the Established Sects further purged of the unscriptural Leaves of the Mass Book: price 2d.; likewise the three reputed “Blasphemous Papers, or most insidious Libels on our holy Faith, by a Vice President of the Uxbridge Auxiliary Society.” The publication of which led to the secession of the zealous and reputable Rector of St. George’s, Hanover-square.—Vide, “Norris’s Practical Exposition,” and the British Critic, September, 1814.

P. 278. Note c.

The end which the Bible Society had in view in going the lengths to which they went, that they might in *semblance* at least, establish themselves in our two Universities, was illustrated, in the Note above referred to, by a similar manœuvre of the Puritans. The alledged intention of the proceeding may now be verified from their own Report: for in the Appendix to the last, a letter from Mr. Owen to the Secretary of a Bible Society, formed in the American College at Nassau Hall, New Jersey, is inserted, in which the example of our two eminent seats of learning is made use of to animate the zeal of the American students; and through them to incite other learned bodies, into whose hands the Annual Report may come, to affiliation: and to give the example thus employed, an importance which it does not actually possess, Mr. Owen has ventured to state that the *Universities* here, “are now *publicly* and *actively* engaged in promoting the general dissemination of the Holy Scriptures;” though, it is scarce possible that he can be ignorant that the Auxiliary Society in question was at Oxford proposed to the Vice-Chancellor, and rejected as a University measure; and at Cambridge was not attempted to be brought forward. What credit can be attached to the Reports of a Society, which inserts amongst its documents such *palpable mis-statements* !!!

P. 310. Note a.

To render as intelligible as possible the comparative advantages which the Bible and the Christian Knowledge Societies afford their respective members, in the particular cases of parochial collections, which it is equally the object of both to encourage. Let it be premised that the Bible Society regulation is to return Bibles to such an amount not exceeding *one-half* of any collection, estimated at *prime cost*, as a Committee appointed for that purpose shall have found to be needed by the poor of that vicinity. And that the corres-

ponding rule of the Christian Knowledge Society is to send books to the amount of *two-thirds* of any collection estimated at the *reduced* prices of the Society.

This being ascertained, the following examples will, at a single glance, put every one in possession of the merits of the question :—

With THE BIBLE SOCIETY,	<i>Prime Cost.</i>
Six Bibles, nonpareil 12mo. at 4s. 6d.	£. 1 7 0

To obtain which six Bibles, as twice that sum (according to their regulation) must be remitted - 2 14 0

With the SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE,	<i>Reduced Price.</i>
Six Bibles, nonpareil 12mo. at 3s. 3d.	£. 0 19 6
Remitted to the Parent Society, according to the rule of their Institution	0 9 9
	£. 1 9 3

Again, to put the same thing in another view :

Suppose a parochial collection to amount to £.18 : as 4s. 6d. is to 9*l*. so is 1 Bible to 40 Bibles ; the number procurable from the BIBLE SOCIETY.

As 3s. 3d. is to 12*l*. so is 1 Bible to 74 ; nearly the number procurable by the same collection from the SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.

In other words again, while the SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE in return for any packet or depot, requires an additional sum of *half* the amount of the *reduced prices* of such books ; the BIBLE SOCIETY requires the additional payment of the *whole* of the amount of the *cost prices*.

This is not an improper place to observe on the 20 per cent. advance which the Bible Society made last year upon the *reduced* prices of their Bibles. The progressive encrease of the *cost* prices since the *reduced* prices were fixed in 1806, is alledged

as the ground of it ; and though the Editor, not having the table of prices of 1806 in his possession, cannot make the comparison ; he is ready to admit the progressive advance, as stated by the General Committee. He observes however that, subjoined to the table of prices for 1809, there is a note which, referring to the great increase of *cost* prices that had then taken place, announces the resolution of the Committee not to advance their *reduced* prices at present, relying on *the liberality of the public* to support them in rendering the Holy Scriptures as cheap as possible, in order to promote an extensive circulation.* Now the *public*, it must be admitted on all hands, have performed *their part* of this contract, they have most amply yielded that *increased* support for which reliance was placed upon their liberality ; for in 1810, the net receipts of the Society more than doubled those of the year before, and on every succeeding year to 1812 inclusive, the net receipts of each have nearly doubled those of the preceding ; insomuch that this item in the account, which in 1809 amounted only to £11562 12s. 4½d, stands in 1812 at £76455 1s. yet in the face of this pledge voluntarily entered into, circulated through the kingdom to extort its further benevolence, and ratified on the part of its bountiful inhabitants by their fulfilling the terms annually with *reduplicate* profusion, have the Bible Society undisguisedly set at nought their plighted Faith—their net receipts, when the violation was committed, approaching to nearly *seven* times the amount to which they had been raised, when, upon *their own* proposal, the obligation was contracted.

But there is yet a most important remark to be made upon the *period* when the advance of the reduced prices was ordered—it was at that conjuncture, when, by the establishment of Bible Associations^a to take Bibles at *prime cost*, the Society was

*. If it should not immediately strike the reader, how the advance of the *reduced* prices can have an advantageous operation upon the Society's funds, through the means of Bible

relieving itself of a large portion of its *home* expenditure—when, after having entrapped the rich and charitable into subscriptions for *the supply of the poor* : it had resorted to an expedient to make the poor *buy Bibles for themselves*—this is the crisis of advancement, so that a double fraud is comprized in one transaction—the making the poor *pay* for that of which a gratuitous supply had been provided for them, and the making them pay moreover *an increase of price* for the commodity, when the Society was under contract *not* to advance it—and all this that they might reserve the money given primarily for *home* use for the purchase of *influence abroad*.

P. 318. Note h.

The President of the Clapton Meeting has disclaimed the sentiment imputed to him, and has called upon the Editor to retract it. In justice therefore to the President the Editor is bound to record his denial, but in justice to the friend who fa-

Associations, which draw Bibles from its depositary, not at the *reduced*, but at the *cost* prices of the Institution ; it is necessary to state that these Associations, though they *buy* of the Society at its *cost* prices, yet *sell* at its *reduced* prices to the *poor*—and as all the *surplus* they can save passes through the Auxiliary Societies, of which they are branches, into the *general* treasury, for the *foreign* purposes of the establishment, it is very obvious, that the advance in question, as a measure of finance, was very profoundly devised and very critically adopted. Upon the RECEIPTS for sales of 1813, it would amount to upwards of £4000, and if extended to the *issues* from the depositary in that year, it would more than double that amount—a considerable portion of which may be considered as having been destrained from the earnings of the Poor—It being distinctly stated that “the major part of the Bibles and Testaments,” entered on the account, under the head of “Sales,” “were purchased by *Bible Associations*.”

voured him with the summary of the speeches delivered on that occasion, he is also bound to state that the reporter is positive that the above passage is in substance correctly reported. It is left, therefore, to the reader to decide which is most likely to be mistaken, a gentleman placing himself in the new and nervous situation of an extempore declaimer, or one of his audience taking minutes of his speech as he delivers it. For it is positively re-affirmed that minutes were taken, though the President questions the fact. The utmost the Editor can therefore allow the President to do is to *disclaim the sentiment*, but he cannot take upon himself to alter the expression.

P. 349. Note h.

At the period when this Volume was published Bible Associations were the lowest department to which the ramifications of the Bible Society had been extended, but in the beginning of the last winter the provisions of the 9th article of the constitution of those unostentatious, yet very efficient departments of the confederacy (see p. 350) were put in operation, and the *splitting* system (see p. *ibid.* note i.) commenced by the subdivision of the Association districts into *Square*, *Street*, *Lane*, and *Alley* Bible Committees; the most celebrated of which was a Square Committee at the west end of the town, announced to the public under the patronage of a venerable Prelate, whose name, doubtless, without his consent or privity, was thus indecently brought forward to lure the servants of the neighbourhood to the Meeting, who were all specially solicited to attend.

The Bible Society is thus assuming a very different complection from that with which it began its career. It came forth to public view, arrayed in the imposing splendour of rank and character; and thus apparelled as an angel of light, it so dazzled the understandings of a large portion of that numerous class of benevolent and pious men, which it has been

at once the glory and the safeguard of the Nation to have cherished in her bosom, that its very presence overawed consideration ; or if the most oblique glance of suspicion was venturously emitted, a blaze of moral worth and exalted dignity instantly confounded it ; and thus with mouth stretched forth to Heaven, the *tongue* of the Institution ran through the world, enlisting confederates, and purloining wealth with more rapidity than the observation even of those not imposed upon by its specious exterior could follow it ; and with an overwhelming influence, which all the solid grounds that they alledged for circumspection and enquiry could not controul.

But that part of the community which is at once ingenuous and discerning, is every day becoming sensible that it has relied too implicitly upon presumptive evidence, and has too hastily given credit to clamorous pretensions, and a very widely spreading defalcation from the Society in the *higher and middle* ranks of life is taking place. It is known to the Editor that during the last year many of its anniversary meetings, in various parts of the kingdom which he could enumerate, nay, even that so splendidly set forth, as held in the Egyptian Hall at the Mansion-House, have not received that countenance which the attendance of the eminently great and good afforded them in time past. It is further known, that in those parts of the kingdom which were not Auxiliarized, of which Rye in Sussex, and the counties of Hampshire and Dorsetshire may be alledged as instances, its most strenuous exertions to effect an incorporation have been but of small avail. The Bishop of Bristol has seen sufficient cause, and had the manliness to refuse his patronage to the last named Institution ; and at its Constituent Meeting, a Breeches-maker from Weymouth, in the dissenting line, was the most conspicuous orator, who made a *successful* attempt at declamation.

The Society, however, is not to be deemed either an expiring or an insignificant body on this account ; it would never,

it is true, have attained magnitude and importance in any degree formidable, but for the distinguished patronage which it at first received; but, having established itself as it has done, it is not the *mere retirement* of those by whose countenance it was raised to greatness, that will either bring about its dissolution or reduce it to insignificance again.' As it is stated above, the change taking place in consequence of its altered circumstances is only in its *complection*. It has obtained from the great and wealthy all it wants from *them*, and its assiduities are now, in a great measure, devoted to the *poor*. In this class of our countrymen—the great mass of our population—it finds many who are truly pious but undiscerning; many more who are profligate, artful, and discontented; and it is now employed in the domiciliary visitation of the whole of these, and in dividing and subdividing them into superintending and subordinate confederations, and in the drawing from them their weekly pence; if ignorantly religious, by mispersuading them that their precious mites thus appropriated will purchase them immortality; if abandoned, by holding forth the inviting prospect of better times, in a temporal point of view, as the inevitable consequence of the new and ameliorated æra of human life, which is gradually advancing towards its accomplishment through the labours of the Association *.

* The following extracts from the Appendix to the last Report of the Bible Society, taken in connection with what is said in the body of that Report, p. 43, and in page 350, Note h. and 406, Note *, of the preceding work will, it is conceived, incline the reader to admit that the above detail is not altogether visionary:—

“ The Auxiliary Society of Southwark, with its *twelve* associations, comprise a body of more than *six hundred and fifty* active agents in the Bible cause. When you reflect that one hundred and twenty-eight of these are annually succeeded by new members, and consider the influence which each indi-

It has been already shewn that the Irish Union, and previously to that the Puritan Committees, furnished the models of which the Auxiliary system is an accurate imitation. Evidence is now to be produced that the nation was no sooner delivered from the anarchy of the Protectorate, and returned to its wonted habits of decency and due subordination to legitimate authority, than some of the Non-conformists planned the revival of the Puritanico Jesuitical confederacy, by which they had in past times raised themselves into power. The fact is, that what the Dissenting interest have now accomplished is the object which they have been aiming at from the Restoration downwards, by comprehension and occasional Conformity schemes, by the removal of tests, and by Feathers Tavern Associations. The fundamental principles of all these conceits and combinations is the Bible "*without note or comment*," and the end of them, the confounding all religious distinctions. The Bible Society critically analyzed is, as far as the confederacy extends, the *virtual* removal of all tests, and is spreading rapidly that

dual possesses within his immediate sphere, the constantly increasing *moral effect* will appear prodigious, and *in its ultimate results incalculable*."—Extract from 2d Report of Southwark Auxiliary Society, published in 10th Annual Report of Bible Society, p. 137.

"The number of Bible Associations which have been matured and rendered efficient within a portion of this district, (the Tindale Ward Auxiliary Bible Society) containing 6255 families, in all 29,605 souls, (according to the population return of 1811) is twenty-four. In these Associations there are 2076 members; and they subscribe at the rate of 28*l.* 18*s.* 6*d.* weekly, which, if continued until the end of the year from their formation, will make 1503*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*; in donations 80*l.* 14*s.* 10*d.*; annual subscribers 18*l.* 19*s.*; altogether 1602*l.* 17*s.* 2*d.*."—Extract from 1st Annual Report of Tindale Ward Auxiliary Bible Society, published in 10th Annual Report of Bible Society.

religious indifference through the land which will prepare the way for their *legislative* abrogation, and thus open those flood-gates through which mis-belief and unbelief as the succeeding waves of one mighty torrent, will rush with an impetuosity to be no more restrained to the overwhelming of the true faith of the Gospel.

With these preliminary observations, the statement above adverted to, which suggested them, and which describes a *frustrated* design remarkably parallel to that which has received in our days such *general countenance*, is submitted to public consideration to speak for itself. It is as follows, and will be found in the Preface to a Pamphlet in folio, by Dr. Hicks, entitled *The Spirit of Popery Speaking out of the Mouths of Phanatical Protestants*. Printed 1680. He thus addresses the Dissenters of that day :—

“ If you take not speedy care, they will put you upon *Jesuitical projects* : set up a cause and interest amongst you, that will be dearer than that of the public, and bring you under another government besides that of your prince. There was a project of that *Jesuitical* nature attempted by some of your Principals about four or five years ago, when some of your Ministers and others caballed together about reducing the *Presbyterians*, (whether over *England* only, or over all the three nations, I do not well remember) into the same sort of policy, by which the *Jesuites* are governed all over the world. The nation was to be divided into districts, or provinces, every district was to have its *Provincial* ; and over all the provinces, was to be appointed one General, to reside constantly (as I remember) in *London* ; and the first who was to have the honour of that office (like the founder of the *Jesuites*) had been a soldier, and great malefactor, and also fit to be General of an army, and presided in that consult. He is a Gentleman whom you all know, and makes a great part of a late narrative, wherein this imprudent narrator implicitly calls you the most sober and considerate Protestants in the land.

The provincials in their several districts were to take an account of the growth or decay of the party, to note their friends and enemies, to receive their contributions, and to give an account of all to the General, who was to supervise for the good of the whole. This account with which I am confident I don't surprize some of you, was told me upon condition of secrecy, by a very honest and peaceable, but very rigid *Presbyterian Minister*, our countryman ; who having got notice of the consult, broke it in the beginning, by telling the projectors how he abhorred it, and threatening to discover, if they did not desist. He told me also, that he believed the project came first from the designed General, who intended by that means to raise his broken fortunes, which, if he had accomplished, he might easily have done."

No. IX.

*Speeches of W. Wickstead, Esq. and the Rev.
John Eyton.*

SHREWSBURY CHRONICLE, 16th July, 1813.

*Shropshire Auxiliary Bible Society, first Anniversary Meeting,
continued from our last.*

Mr. Wickstead, after a few introductory words, addressed the Meeting as follows * :—

“ When a certain philosopher of antiquity was desired to give an answer to the question, ‘ What is God ? ’ he required a day to consider of it ; at the end of the day, when the question was repeated, he asked for two days more ; when these were gone, he demanded four days, and thus went on repeatedly doubling the time : at last he declared, that the more he meditated upon the question, the less able he found himself to answer it. And this is the case, I imagine, with every reflecting mind that undertakes to contemplate this profound subject,

* The point to be noted in this Address is, that it exemplifies how a man may advocate the cause of the Bible Society, and promote the distribution of the Bible, without receiving any of its peculiar doctrines as articles of Faith. Though exceedingly specious, a Deist might utter every sentiment which it contains : and it is not easy to conceive how a firm believer in the Atonement, can so discountenance that fundamental Christian Doctrine, as it is discountenanced in the apparently measured developement of religious opinion with which the first paragraph concludes.

this vast deep, in which all our thoughts are drowned. Is it not then an obvious advantage to have this most interesting question, a question in which no man who has paid the slightest attention to the influence of religion upon individuals and society, will say that he is unconcerned, or that it is a matter of indifference what sentiments prevail upon it? Is it not, allow me to ask, a great advantage to have this momentous question answered for us in the rational and satisfactory manner in which it is answered in the Sacred Scriptures? God is a Spirit, and they who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. This description of the Divinity, and of the homage he requires from his intelligent offspring, subverts at once the whole fabric of *superstition*, and lays the foundation of *rational religion*, which springs up in its place. No idle rites, no burdensome ceremonies, no *painful mortifications*, no cruel sacrifices, no *violation of the affections*, no abandonment of social duties, are necessary to appease the wrath, or conciliate the favour of that God, whom Christians are taught to reverence and adore; for he is a Spirit incapable of human passions, neither injured nor benefited by our actions or services, and requiring for their own good only the devotions of his creatures.

“ To believe in the existence of invisible intelligent power seems natural to man; it signifies little whether it be an original instinct, or the universal accompaniments of his nature; the belief appears to be inevitable, and as this belief has in all ages and in all countries led to the establishment of sundry practices, which materially affect personal and social happiness, it is evidently of the first importance that it be a rational, and not a blind belief; that it do not depress, confound, and terrify; but that it soothe, sustain, expand, and elevate the soul. Now such a religion as this is to be found in the Bible. It is accompanied also by moral precepts, which are simple, perspicuous, beautiful, pure and easy to be understood. Let any man peruse the reasoning of the most acute philosophers,

or think for himself upon the subject of moral obligation ; and when he has exhausted his own and other men's thoughts, let him declare whether he has discovered any foundation for morals that is not either resolvable into, or strictly coincident with, the will of God, the foundation on which Christian morality rests.

“ Has any rule been laid down for the government of human conduct, by the wisest men, superior to, or comparable with, that epitome of duties, that concentration of moral philosophy, the divine law of doing to others as we would have them do unto us ? Or where can be found a more just description of religious conduct than in the comprehensive remark, that pure and undefiled religion is to visit the fatherless and widow in their distress, and to keep himself unspotted from the world ? You perceive, Sir, that I am taking the lowest supposition. I am supposing the Bible to be put into our hands, unaccompanied by the external tokens of its Divine Original ; and in this view of it, I contend that it is worthy of all acceptance. It carries within it the evidence of its origin, which appeals directly to the heart and understandings of men ; and few, who have read it attentively, refuse to acknowledge its celestial descent : it contains every thing most excellent respecting the duties of man, which is to be found in the writings of antiquity ; and the purity and perfection of its religious principles are confessedly unrivalled. It would be an easy and a pleasing task, were it within the compass of an address of this nature, to shew how Christianity allies itself to all useful institutions ; how it civilizes, refines, and exalts the character both of nations and individuals. To its influence is justly ascribed the abolition of domestic slavery, that indelible disgrace of Greece and Rome. It has, in a very remarkable manner, improved the condition of one half of the Christian world, and has abundantly augmented our fireside enjoyments, by raising woman to a more elevated rank in society*. If it

* De Stael.

have not yet put an end to war, it has at least diminished its horrors by humanizing the ferocious feelings. Prisoners are now treated with a degree of humanity unknown to the ages preceding the introduction of Christianity. They are not sold for slaves by their conquerors, as was the custom among the most polished nations of antiquity. The exclusive praise too of having founded hospitals, the noblest of institutions, and the most honourable to human nature of any upon record, belongs to the Christian Church; and I believe I may venture to say, that since the Gospel has been preached to the poor, far greater attention has been paid to their animal wants, and that their social comforts have been greatly promoted. Indeed it is one of the distinguishing excellencies of this benign religion, to inspire compassion towards every child of want, to direct the efforts of its followers to the alleviation of the distresses of life, to pour balm into the wounded heart, and to shew the utmost tenderness of feeling towards all whose hard lot implores the pitying eye, and needs the sustaining arm of charity.

“ Such are some of the advantages resulting from the prevalence of Christianity. It would, however, be giving a very imperfect idea of its value, entirely to omit what nevertheless it is not my business to dwell upon; and yet, perhaps, they are the things which constitute the principal charm of religion, and endear it to most of its votaries. I allude to the peace of mind which the contrite feel from its consolatory doctrines, the hope and comfort it inspires in seasons of deep distress, and the sacred calm it diffuses through the breast of the upright, which the world can neither give nor take away. Thousands have derived, and daily do derive, unspeakable consolation and joy from the study of the Bible; and I envy not that man's feelings, who can treat with levity or contempt what is known to alleviate human woe; nor can I regard that philosophy as sound, or as taking a sufficiently comprehensive view of human nature, which overlooks or neglects as beneath

its notice, all provision for the spiritual wants of man. This leads me to remark, that the zeal necessary to support an Institution like the Bible Society, will depend much upon our opinion of the nature of man. If we consider him to be a mere animal, occupying a place only one step above the brute creation, having similar appetites and propensities, affected with similar pains and pleasures, and, like the brutes, formed only for a transitory existence—gifted, indeed, with a higher degree of reason, which adds something to his enjoyments by extending his views, but which adds much more to his wretchedness by making him sensible of his own worthlessness and insignificance. If his hope be like the dust that is blown away with the wind—like the thin froth that is driven away with the storm—like the smoke which is dispersed here and there with a tempest; if all his lofty expectations and noble aspirations are doomed to find their termination in the grave; if man be thus the riddle, jest, and plaything of the world, why then it is comparatively of little importance to extend the knowledge of a book composed of such materials as the Bible. But if there be in man a something vastly superior to any principle known to exist in the inferior animals, and which, however inscrutable may be its essence, yet since it possesses no properties in common with matter, cannot correctly be called material. A something which thinks, remembers, compares, judges, and contrives; which wills, hopes, fears, loves, and hates; which enjoys a high degree of satisfaction when engaged in right conduct, and suffers the pangs of remorse when it has done amiss; which is ever looking forward to futurity with an anxious eye, and constantly devising schemes of happiness to come; which is ever grasping, but never satisfied; always planning, but never compleating;—a something, too, of such an awful nature, that it may be sunk by sin below the level of the brutes, or raised by virtue and divine instruction to the sublimest heights of excellence;—in one word, if there be in man a soul, that eminently distinguishes him above

every other inhabitant of this terrestrial ball, then indeed it is a matter of the deepest and most serious concern to enquire, what is his business here, and his destination hereafter? Now in this most interesting of all inquiries, very many of the ablest and most excellent men have derived the best assistance from the Bible; and surely it is wonderfully adapted to our wants, to our expectations, to our capacities, to our mixed nature, and imperfect condition. This is the book which the Bible Society desires to circulate; this book, unmixed with the comments of any particular Church. Man is impatient of the controul of his fellow-man, in matters touching his sacred interests. We therefore leave to every denomination of Christians the uninfringed right of interpretation, conceiving that no man is amenable to another for his use or abuse of this privilege."

July 23.

The Rev. John Eyton addressed the Meeting nearly as follows:—

" Sir.—In rising to acknowledge, on the part of the Branch Bible Society of Wellington, and its vicinity, the honour which has just now been conferred upon us by this very respectable assembly, I hope that I shall not seem to be assuming to myself a degree of importance, to which I certainly have no just pretensions, being only an inferior agent to that Establishment.

" The very destitute condition of the poor, in regard to the holy Scriptures, throughout the populous district which our Institution occupies; the increased attention to the subject of religion, which is diffusing itself so generally both among the higher and lower orders of the community; the example given us by the neighbouring parish of Madeley, which has so long stood pre-eminent in this county for every good work; together with the great encouragement and support, which we have derived from the patronage of the highly respected person,

who has kindly condescended to become our President, are, in fact, the principal causes which have combined, under the blessing of God, to facilitate the formation, and to promote the prosperity of the Branch Bible Society of Wellington, and its vicinity.

“ That similar associations have, in the course of the last twelve months, been multiplied throughout the kingdom, in a proportion, not only unprecedented in any former year, but far surpassing even our most sanguine expectations, is a circumstance in which, I am persuaded, we have not failed most thankfully to recognize the continued favour of God towards an Institution, manifestly designed to convey the knowledge of his name to the uttermost parts of the earth. Surely, Sir, those eyes must be sadly dimmed by prejudice, which cannot discern in the British and Foreign Bible Society, with all its various dependencies, ‘ the vine which the right hand of the Lord hath planted, and the branch which he hath made so strong for himself.’ How wonderfully has he prepared room for it ! He has caused it to take deep root, and it is filling the land. Already are the hills covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof are like the goodly cedars. She sends out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river. There are those, it is true, who would break down her hedges, and pluck off her grapes. The boar out of the forest would root it up, and the wild beast of the field would devour it, but he that heareth prayer looks down from heaven. The Lord of Hosts beholds and visits this vine.

“ When I first beheld the Bible Society emerging as light from obscurity ; when I contemplated her object, and considered her constitution, I could not but anticipate the day, when in a world like this, fallen from its allegiance to its Maker, and lying in the wicked one, such an Institution would be called upon to draw in her own defence that sword of the spirit, which she was benevolently placing in the hands of others.

“ One thing perplexed me: it appeared so utterly impracticable for persons bearing the Christian name, to come forward with any semblance of consistency, as the declared opposers of a Society formed for the exclusive purpose of circulating the Christian Scriptures, that I was totally at a loss to conceive on what ostensible ground the adversaries of an Institution, to say the least of it so perfectly unexceptionable, would deem it prudent to erect their batteries. To direct an attack against the object of the Society they would not surely dare; and yet, Sir, one hardy and adventurous assailant was not to be deterred even from this enterprize. O tell it not in Gath, that a Protestant Divine of the nineteenth century has objected to the general distribution of the Bible as a measure fraught with mischief! Alas, Sir! what infatuation marks the reasoning even of the most profound and accomplished scholar, who does not as a little child receive the kingdom of God.

“ But I should be doing great injustice to the adversaries of the Bible Society, were I to represent them generally as the abettors of this singular position. The greater part have held a more cautious course, and used a more imposing language; professing to approve of the object, they have impeached the constitution of the Society; representing it as a monstrous and unnatural junction of discordant interests, a compound of iron and clay, pretending nothing less (such is their dream, and the interpretation of it) than the ultimate demolition of our ecclesiastical establishment.

“ It is not my intention minutely to examine the brittle chain of improbabilities, whereby the propagators of those fears, whether real or pretended, have laboured and toiled to make out some connection between our betraying the interests of the Church of England, and our subscribing to the British and Foreign Bible Society. The weakness of their arguments has been detected and opposed by every individual who has stooped to consider them. The sophisticated chain has been broken at every point where the finger of truth has touched

it; and the fragments have at length been gathered up within the hand of one whose athletic grasp has even ground them to powder.

“ I am sorry, in speaking even of the opponents of the Bible Society, to use a term which may sound somewhat harsh; but really, Sir, many of the insinuations that have been thrown out by them appear to me to have called, not so much for an argumentative exposure of their fallacy, as for a calm and faithful reprehension of their wickedness. Might it not be asked, for instance, upon what principle it is, that any man thinks himself authorised to presume, that the numerous Christians of other denominations, who are zealously co-operating with the Members of the Established Church, in furthering the objects of the Bible Society, have other ends in view than that which they profess in giving us the right hand of fellowship? Is it on the principle of charity which thinketh no evil, that a conduct so frank, so liberal, so conciliating, is to be considered as the cloak of inveterate hostility? Or what purpose, it might be enquired, can this want of candour, this violation of justice towards our Dissenting brethren, be found to answer, unless it be the purpose of him * who, by adhering to the maxim,

* At the Hackney Auxiliary Meeting held yesterday, (December 15th) a young Divine, (whose name, from respect to his connections, the Editor refrains from publishing) having with singular modesty and singular respect for his Ecclesiastical superiors, in station, years, and abilities, introduced himself to his auditory as standing forward on the occasion from a wish to wipe off from the CLOTH the indelible stain of opposition to the Bible Society; in the course of his speech, replete with the ravings of enthusiasm, borrowed from Mr. Eyton the passage here referred to, retailing the charge against the objects of his spleen of adopting the diabolical maxim, and of acting under diabolical influence, with a coarseness of expression, if possible, surpassing that which its author has

‘divide and rule,’ (a maxim to the adoption of which the prejudices and passions of mankind afford too much facility) has maintained, from the beginning, so considerable an influence even in the very bosom of the Church?

“When we see a spirit of opposition excited among professing Christians to such an Institution as that which we are this day assembled to support; an Institution whose only bond is charity, and whose exclusive aim is truth; when we resolve this opposition into its constituent principles, and consider the direct tendency of their operation, whether in a simple or a compound form, the result is such ‘pure, unmixed, dephlegmated, defecated evil,’ that it is impossible not to perceive that ‘an enemy hath done this;’ an enemy to whom truth and charity are alike offensive; an enemy who must needs view with irreconcilable abhorrence every measure which is calculated to diffuse the light of life among them which sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, or to draw the bonds of union closer among the too much divided subjects of the Prince of Peace.

“To such an enemy we may readily conceive it must be an odious and appalling sight, to behold the Dissenter and the Churchman dropping their doubtful disputations, and cordially co-operating in the blessed work of breaking the bread of life to them that are ready to perish for lack of knowledge. I can picture to myself the infernal council, looking on and doubting whereunto this will grow. I can imagine the angels and principalities and powers of darkness trembling as they

ventured to employ. This gentleman, till lately, a zealous but sober-minded and exemplary Parish Priest, is one of the many victims to the spells and incantations of the Bible Society, whose perversion, when the infatuating influence of the Institution has subsided, will more powerfully invoke against it the execration of the truly pious than any other of the many injuries which it has done to pure and undefiled Religion.

perceive the dawn of that day, when the kingdom of Christ shall no longer be divided against itself; when ‘Ephraim shall not envy Judah, nor Judah vex Ephraim.’ I seem to hear them exclaim, in words once adopted by their agents upon earth, ‘If we let them thus alone, all men will believe on him;’ and resolving immediately to have recourse to stratagem, so often tried aforetime with success, they dispatch their swift-winged messengers to sow the seeds of discord, to blow up the coals of strife; to infuse a spirit of jealousy and distrust among ‘this band of brothers;’ and, if possible, to dissolve a union pregnant with certain ruin to the god of this world.

“But, oh, Sir, who does not grieve to see among the unsuspecting dupes of these devices, men pledged and qualified to espouse a better cause?—men of renown in our congregation, princes in the assembly, eminent alike by their talents and their stations. When one Reverend Divine (of whom we still hope better things) publishes to the world, from the very foot of the Primate’s throne, a volume of Reasons (as he terms them) for refusing to support an Institution, whose only aim is to put into the hands of men the word of God: When another from the chair of a Professor, a Professor of Divinity too, in the University of Cambridge, blows the trumpet of alarm in the ears of every member of the Senate, I had almost said in the ears of every inhabitant of the land, lest they should unwittingly come into the secret, and be united to the assembly of those whom he shrewdly suspects of a design to dig down the walls of the Established Church: When we hear the warning sound reiterated through the diffusive medium of our county newspapers, and are gravely told that this attempt to put the simple inhabitants of our towns and villages upon their guard against the impending danger, originates in the best intention, and in the sincerest attachment to the interests of the Church of England; who can forbear to mourn over such a perversion of judgment, such a prostitution of

zeal? Who, that has any measure of the mind that was in Christ, can suppress the prayer, ‘Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do?’

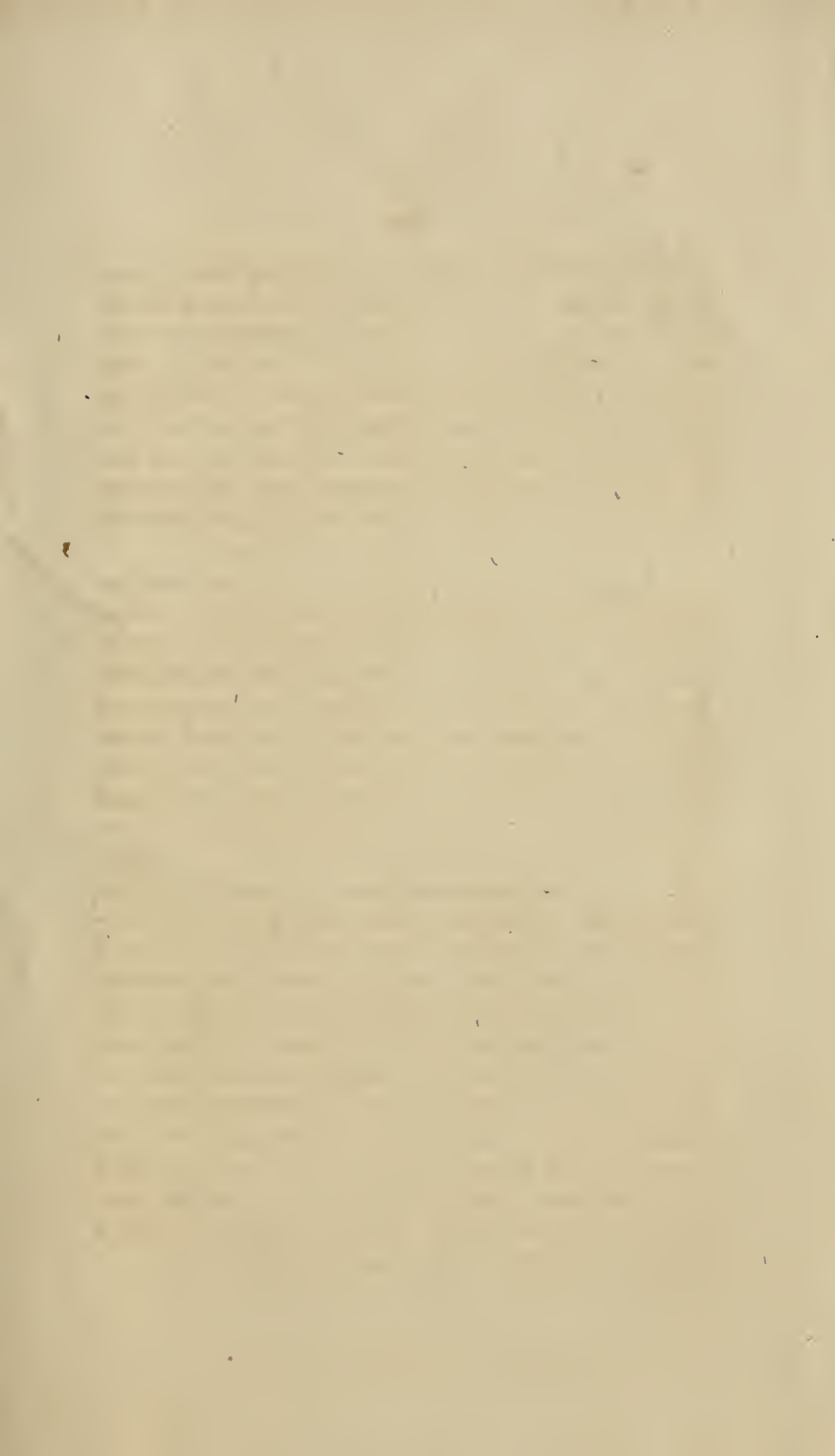
“Still, Sir, as it respects the Bible Society, there is no cause for discouragement. On the contrary, it is certainly no idle boast to assert that whatever advantage that Society may have derived from the exertions of its friends, it is no less indebted to those of its enemies. Its increasing prosperity in the midst of all their opposition, like that of the Church of Christ, of which it forms the most becoming and distinguished ornament, very forcibly illustrates the observation of the Psalmist, that ‘the wrath of man shall turn to the praise of God, and that the remainder of wrath he will restrain.’ In this assurance, Sir, I feel an effectual antidote to every anxious feeling, to every emotion of alarm for the interest and prosperity of our pre-eminently excellent Society. Nor can I regard the failure of every effort which has hitherto been made, to put asunder those whom God has joined together in this most glorious undertaking, otherwise than as security and pledge, that we shall still continue to view the exertions, which our brethren the Dissenters are making in common with ourselves, not with the jaundiced eyes of jealousy and distrust, but through the purer medium of truth and love. *In the scrutiny of our own motives for adhering to the Established Church, we can scarcely be too suspicious. In passing judgement upon those of our brethren who separate from her communion, it is equally difficult to be too charitable.*

“But, alas! Sir, the severity which we ought to exercise towards ourselves is generally directed against our neighbours, while the charity which should cover a brother’s failings, is commonly employed to hide our own. Could both Churchmen and Dissenters be persuaded to exercise their vigilance, and to put forth their zeal, in endeavouring to detect and to eradicate those remnants of pride, vain glory, and hypocrisy, of envy, hatred, malice, and uncharitableness,

which, it is to be feared, may yet be found lurking in all our hearts, the most formidable obstacles to our holding the essential articles of the faith 'in unity of spirit and in the bond of peace,' would thereby be effectually surmounted. Well, Sir, let us rejoice, and give thanks that we see this work begun; nor let us less highly venerate and value the British and Foreign Bible Society, as a point of union among those who profess, and call themselves Christians, than as an Institution which promises, under the continued blessing of God, to be the light of the world and the joy of the whole earth.

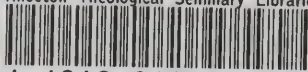
" But I forbear, Sir, to trespass longer upon your patience. Allow me only to express my heart's desire and prayer, that the spirit of unanimity and concord, which so visibly pervades this Meeting, may continue to actuate the various individuals by whom it is composed, when dispersed to their respective places. In the pulpit and in the closet, in our public labours and in our secret prayers; may it still be borne in mind that, however distinguished from one another by some minor points of discipline, or of doctrine, we are, nevertheless, fellow-members of the British and Foreign Bible Society. The recollection of that thought may serve to remind us (of what has been too long forgotten) that we are likewise fellow-members of the body of Christ. Thus, Sir, shall the division of our tribes be healed: thus shall the breaches, and desolations of our temple be repaired, and the peaceful Spirit of God, who has been grieved by our 'bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking,' shall return and make his abode with us. Thus, Sir, shall all men know that we are Christ's disciples; and many an individual, at home and abroad, who, in the possession a Bible, may reap the fruit of our united labours, shall be led to exclaim, in thankful admiration of the grace of God, 'Behold how good and joyful a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.' "

THE END.





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